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THE TALK OF THE SPARROWS.

BY RAYDAR D. CRINE.

What in the world are they saying—
The sparrows murmuring away—
Over the grass of the public square,
Under the trees in the shade?
I think they are talking together
Of how their mates build their nest,
So the tiny eggs will enable safe
Below the feathered breast.

And how the young will be reared
Up through when they are full grown,
And they find to the park's pleasure
Which without them it would not have had.
I see these fix at the fountain,
And they drink of the water,
And they seem to be creatures of rapture,
That know not sorrow or fear.

They spring for the crumbs that are scattered,
And always dainty eat;
Not a morsel of that white manna
Do they touch with their gentle feet.
They are happy in their existence,
In their beautiful, dainty way,
And one cannot help wondering, pondering,
What they to each other may say.

Ah! the voice of birds is the language
Which we never can understand,
Though grateful we are for the music
That comes from the throat of the bird.
And they seem to be creatures of rapture,
Of soaring the blue vault above,
And many a sweet heart that suffers
They soothe with their language of love.

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "SUE, BENIGH," THE "WHITE WITCH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DESPERATE LOVE LETTER.

The thoughts that passed through Hester Blake's mind, as she sat in that silent room, bending over the fire, were not of a nature to let her mind dwell exactly to have changed her nature, had it been a truer and nobler one than it was.

She had come to him in the hope that he would enable her to escape from the humiliation of taking a part in the nefarious scheme which her mother had concocted against Dr. Mason and husband; but now there seemed to be no other course open to her than to receive privately, and a speedy union with the man who held her promise; or great wealth, with the chances in her favor that the power it would give her might enable her to extricate herself from the grasp Mason had laid upon her fate.

All her lingering scruples died away when Dr. Mason came softly into the room, and stood where she could see his shrewd, yet stern face in contrast with the noble lineaments of her father. She bitterly thought:

"He does not even look like a gentleman, yet I was pronounced fortunate to have won his love. Anything is good enough for false coxcomb, though I am so near to him as the wife of his brother, I will not be contented by my choice has caused me to feel, so why shall not I avail myself of it, and feel grateful to her whose shrewdness afforded it to me? I have made up my mind, I will not accept the trifling gift of Mr. Mason's money, when I can so easily make her dependent on mine."

Then she looked around her, and though her mind Mason stood over her patient, and accosted that he was sleeping soundly. He whispered to Hester:

"You can remove your hand from his without danger of awakening him. I will take your place, and you can remain with Miss Landry till your return. It cannot be long now, but you must warn her not to come into the room. Her presence would only excite him, and I do not think Mrs. Brown has left, nor is it expedient that he shall hear Dr. Clay."

"I understand. I will go now, for I must speak with my mother as soon as she arrives," she replied, in a low, dull tone, and he looked sharply at her, trying to read the result of the interview which had just taken place. But Mrs. Blake's daughter was not one to easily perceive, and with some effort, she thought:

"He has disappointed her in some way, and she will fall into our power now. Why should she hesitate when the way is so clear before her? She is too sharp not to understand her own interests. I would take her all the more willingly as fact, but we shall both be better off if she is contented with one man as our family physician."

As Hester gave him her place beside the bed, she pointed significantly to the next room, and asked, in a faint whisper:

"Are you perfectly sure that you told me the truth about her?"

"I cannot tell you of it than I was when I came hither. Decide as you may, you cannot err in doing so."

He bowed her head, and passed out of the room.

Hester sat down by the motionless form of the girl whose rights she was ready to usurp, but now she was alone and unobserved, the bitter impulse of compassion that had moved her when she first looked on the sick girl was quenched, and she tried to convince herself that the course she had chosen was the wisest and best that Estelle would never again be capable of filling.

"There is escape from that way, but I can at least evade him a little while, if I cannot do what they wish. Why should I not consent? It is futile to hesitate, and I will not say longer. I will tell my mother what I have determined on as soon as I see her."

She arose, and went to her little decision when the sound of voices was heard without. She arose and went to the gate, to find her mother alighting from the open carriage which had brought her there, and a tall, ungainly looking girl, in a cheap dress and sun-bonnet of the same material, standing on the road. She gathered herself with animation as Hester as she drew near, and was replied to in the same mode language, though with the broadest accent:

Mrs. Blake smiled as she said:

"I should be delighted to be of use to us, and she will stay as long as we may need her. How are our sick friends now?"

"Both of them are asleep, and we must avoid making a noise to disturb them. The driver had better take the boxes in through the back way, as the two first rooms are occupied by Mr. Landry and his daughter. I will call Nannie to carry in the small parcels myself."

The man went in with the boxes in which

MRS. BLAKE AND HESTER EXAMINING THE CONTENTS OF ESTELLE LANDRY'S TRUNK.

Mrs. Blake had packed such things as she had deemed necessary for what she did not yet know, while Hester went to the kitchen, for oil, jelly and a few bottles of wine, which were from the carriage before it was driven away, and the three went around the house by a narrow pathway, passing through a gate, a wild grass, and found the entrance to the kitchen. The servants had been removed from the first floor, but there was nothing else in the room to show that she had been there, since against the wall.

In a little nook opening from it stood an old settee, which had been thoroughly washed, removing, and beside it was a pile of split wood ready for use.

"We shall do very well," said Mrs. Blake, looking around, and grateful for kindness shown her, but she was incapable of anything beyond that. She was thinking of her son, and how she could put the things in their places, while we speak together. Mrs. Brown has left the house quite clean, I am glad to see."

She made a few signs to the girl, who by this time had taken off her bonnet and shawl, looking around her, as if uncertain what was to be her occupation, when Hester provided her with a simple expression which told the matters had not, in her case, compelled the sudden loss of sense and speech of the girl she heard or observant mind. Eunice Barker was affectionate and grateful for kindness shown her, but she was incapable of anything beyond that. She was ignorant to a degree that was a disfavor to their interests, while we speak together. Mrs. Brown has left the house quite clean, I am glad to see."

She made a few signs to the girl, who by this time had taken off her bonnet and shawl, looking around her, as if uncertain what was to be her occupation, when Hester provided her with a simple expression which told the matters had not, in her case, compelled the sudden loss of sense and speech of the girl she heard or observant mind. Eunice Barker was affectionate and grateful for kindness shown her, but she was incapable of anything beyond that. She was ignorant to a degree that was a disfavor to their interests, while she was a faithful and competent drudge to any one who understood her nature, and by firmness and reward her efforts to please with pleasant looks. She had been occasionally employed at Rose Cottage, and Mrs. Blake quite won her heart by leaving her dumb language and showing herself in kindness with her.

Eunice nodded and smiled in reply to Mrs. Blake's signs, and went to work at once at the duties assigned to her.

"Will he say nothing for you?" asked her mother, in a tone of concentrated anger.

"But that is impossible. What then has he offered you?"

"I have written a letter at his dictation, in which he enjoins my sister to draw fifteen thousand dollars from the bank at New Orleans, and secure that sum to me as a gift. He has promised to marry me."

"Then you will be rewarded for your skill in the system of what he will do for you? But I am glad that you have taken the course you have, though I think you are hurrying him to you, but it does signify a great deal to me that he is unable to give me control of his property. There is literally nothing to be gained by his death, and I am glad that you have refused to be the means of your

absence, and I cannot stifle the jealous pangs that arise when I think that some one among them may come nearer to your heart than your distant Raymond.

"Pardon me, my sweet love, for suggesting doubts as to your constancy, but they will arise in spite of my better judgment, and they must continue to torment me in spite of myself, until the blessed hour arrives which makes you forever my own."

There was much more in the same strain, and as Hester read the words, she recalled the writer in his boyish beauty, and remembered her own strong partiality for him in their childhood.

She fiercely clutched the paper in her hand, and muttered:

"I will take *all*, or nothing! When I know that Ray, the bright, noble, beautiful creature who charmed me in my childhood, is coming back to claim *me* as his bride, I will move heaven and earth to escape from that odious man. I have a new motive to circumvent him *now*, and I will do it, or die in the attempt."

Mrs. Blake had glanced over Annette De Lorme's letters, but when she put out her hand to take one of Raymond's, Hester suddenly huddled them together, and putting them back into the desk, locked it, and hurriedly said:

"I have discovered something which Dr. Macon must not know at present. Let us conceal the desk, and say nothing about its contents till we can consult together. My father is awake. I hear them speaking together, and I must go in to him, while you remain here with Estelle. I will send the doctor to you, but I insist that you shall tell him nothing of what we have found in that trunk."

The mother looked at her in some surprise, and after slight hesitation, said:

"I will do as you wish, but nothing is to be concealed from me, remember. The desk can be put under the bed for the present, and Dr. Macon will not be likely to suspect its presence there. Give me the key, for I too must read those letters that seem to have moved you so deeply."

Hester did not immediately comply with this demand, but she finally surrendered the key, and with assumed indifference, said:

"What you will learn from the letters will show you how difficult is the part I have undertaken to play. But you need have no fears on my account. I have chosen my path, and I intend to walk on it without faltering."

A movement was heard in the next room, and the desk was hastily thrust out of sight beneath the foot of Estelle Landry's bed. A moment later Macon appeared, and informed Hester that her father had asked for her.

CHAPTER X.

HESTER GROWING DESPERATE.

Hester, with a strange glance at Macon as she passed him, went into her father's room, and left him with her mother. She closed the door as she passed through, fearing that Mrs. Blake might incautiously raise her voice, and thus betray to Mr. Landry that she was helping to deceive him, by keeping from him the knowledge that the presence he so much dreaded was already in the house.

Macon drew near Estelle, and significantly said:

"There is not much to fear from *her* interference, Mrs. Blake—that is, if my skill is not at fault. I have induced Hester to believe that recovery is impossible so far as the brain is concerned, but that was only done to quiet such scruples as she seemed to have. If left to nature alone, this girl would be all right in ten days' time, for she has great power of recuperation, both mentally and physically. But it must be your business and mine to keep her in so hazy a condition that she will never be able to assert her rights, or even to understand them."

Mrs. Blake glanced down at the pallid face, and immediately said:

"It would be better for all concerned that she shall never rise from that bed again. It will be a less wrong to her to destroy the body, than to tamper with the mind."

Macon laughed softly, and said:

"Should anything go wrong with us, the accident to her would account for her dazed brain; but if death were produced by unfair means, it might lead to unpleasant results to those in whose care she was left. You see I am bound to think of contingencies. And, moreover, the life of this young lady is my security that when Hester is safely seated in her place, she will not attempt to throw me off. I hope and believe, after what she has said to me, that there is no danger of such inconstancy on her part; but it is best to hold some guarantee in my own hands, and the life of her sister is the best one I can have."

"I cannot understand why it should be," said Mrs. Blake, looking him fixedly in the face.

"Then you are not as sharp as I took you to be, ma'am. Until my marriage with your daughter has actually taken place, the continued existence of this young girl is most important to me; after that event I shall not care much what happens to her, only murder is an ugly thing to think of, and she can be put out of the way effectually enough without resorting to it."

With repressed fierceness, Mrs. Blake said:

"I am to understand then, that the true heiress is to be held as a hostage for the good faith of the spurious one. She is to be left in my care, and what is to prevent me from dealing with her as I choose?"

Macon drew near to her, and slowly said:

"Treachery to *me* in the smallest tittle will be fatal to you, Mrs. Blake, and I would not advise you to attempt it. I know the physical condition of this poor girl, and if anything happens to her beyond what I have myself decreed, I will denounce you as her destroyer even if I ruin myself in doing so. I have risked a great deal by entering into your plans, and I will not be defrauded of the reward I proposed to myself in doing so. When Hester is mine, we can then decide what shall be done with her sister. Until then, you will be careful to obey to the letter the instructions I shall give you."

Mrs. Blake regarded him steadily as he thus spoke, and she comprehended that he did not quite trust in her daughter's assurances of affection for himself, sweetly as they had been given. He meant to render it impossible for Hester to retreat from the fulfillment of the pledges she had given, by holding Estelle Landry in reserve, to be restored to the enjoyment of all she was to lose through their machinations, should it prove his policy to do so.

She spoke in a constrained tone:

"I do not see why you should doubt either Hester or myself. She has assured you that she loves you, and you are aware that it has long been my wish to see her become your wife. We are sufficiently in your power, I think, to dispense with any such guarantee as the life of an imbecile girl will prove."

"What you assert may be true, Mrs. Blake; but until I am *certain* of the future, the existence of Miss Landry shall be carefully guarded by me. To me must be left the ultimate disposal of her fate, and all I ask of you is to use the means I shall leave in your hands to prevent her mental faculties from regaining their original brightness. I am acquainted with many of the subtle secrets of chemistry, and I have a preparation of my own which will act upon the brain to paralyze its activity, without material injury to the physical system. Our patient will even bloom into life and beauty again, but the memory of the past will never come back to trouble her contentment, in the quiet existence she will lead under your care."

"I suppose there is nothing left for me but to do your bidding," said Mrs. Blake gloomily; "but few things could be more repulsive to me than having that girl forever near me, and in the character of my own daughter too. I must feign grief at her condition, when my heart is exulting in it as my own work. I must be kind to her, when my natural feelings would prompt me to persecute her in every possible way. It is a hard task I undertake at your bidding, Dr. Macon."

"You seem to forget, Madam, that this whole plot was concocted by you, and acquiesced in by me because your daughter is so much to me that I am ready to do anything you and she desire, if she will give herself to me as the reward of my coöperation. You do nothing at my bidding. You have laid upon yourself the necessity of taking charge of this young girl, and treating her in such a manner as will cause no suspicion to arise that she is not really your daughter."

Mrs. Blake suddenly changed her manner, and said, in her usual monotonous tones:

"I believe you are right, Julian, and I am very silly to oppose you in any way. You are accustomed to foresee and obviate difficulties, and you are bound to secure your own interests of course. I am sorry, though, that you should mistrust Hester, for she looks forward with certainty to a future union with you."

"It is my business to make it a certainty, Mrs. Blake. Your sex find it convenient to change their mind sometimes, and it is to my interest to guard against any such caprice on the part of your charming daughter. In her new position, she will have many temptations to play the part of the coquette, or even of the inconstant; but I will submit to neither. I am the master of her fate, and also of yours, and you will both do well to remember it. I have no wish to threaten you, but I will not be trifled with in any respect. If I aid you to accomplish your views, you are both to be true as steel to me."

"You cannot doubt *me*, Julian; and as to Hester, I suppose your jealous fears will not be set at rest until you are actually married. The sooner that event takes place the better I shall be pleased; for then we can all go to Europe, and I can once more be near my own child, while that incubus is removed from me, and placed in some safe place to be looked after by others."

"Be sure that you shall be released from your unwelcome charge as soon as it is expedient to do so, Mrs. Blake. I do not wish to impose her on you a moment longer than is necessary; but as long as she is with you I shall hold you responsible for her safety. When the arrangements for my marriage with Hester are actually made, I will settle what shall be done with her sister. Perhaps it will be as well for you to go to Europe, under the pretext of seeing what can be done for her restoration; and once there, we should have little difficulty in finding a safe and suitable asylum for her."

"My dear Julian, your mind and Hester's must be in *rapport*, for she suggested the same course to me when we were talking over the chances of our future reunion. That is the only plan to enable me to rejoin my daughter, and thus the prolonged life of Estelle Landry becomes important to me as the excuse for going abroad."

At that moment the still figure on the bed showed some signs of life. She turned slightly, half unclosed her large dark eyes, and faintly muttered:

"Water! I am thirsty."

The two who had carried on this conversation beside her bed looked at each other, and Mrs. Blake hurriedly asked:

"Can she be conscious of what is passing near her? Do you think she has understood what we have been saying?"

"No; that is quite impossible, for her brain is still confused, and incapable of arranging ideas. She has revived much sooner than I expected. I did not suppose she would be in a condition to speak for hours yet. She must be kept perfectly quiet, and I will prepare a composing draught for her myself."

Mrs. Blake nodded, and he went to a closet in the wall, from which he took a wine glass, and filled it with broken ice from a bucket in which a supply of it was packed. On one of the shelves was a pitcher of water, and he poured a small quantity upon the fragments of ice. He then took from his pocket a vial, with a glass stopper carefully covered with kid, and after removing these, shook from its mouth a white powder that was almost impalpable, till the surface of the water was entirely covered with it.

By the time he had restored the bottle to his pocket, the white crystals had all dissolved, and the water looked perfectly colorless. That it was also tasteless was evident from the eagerness with which the patient swallowed the draught, when it was held to her feverish lips.

She sank back, murmuring:

"Thank you. I—I—feel—" but the words died away on her lips, and with a grim smile of triumph, Macon said:

"I was a little doubtful of its immediate effect on one possessed of such vital power as belongs to her organization, but all is right now. Hester's mind will not be unsettled by finding any further gleams of intelligence in this one. A daily dose from my little bottle will hold the soul in bondage as long as it is continued, and we shall not be likely to fail in administering it, eh, Mrs. Blake?"

There was grim pleasantry in his tone and manner which would have revolted most other women, but Mrs. Blake smiled, as she replied:

"I think not. Where so much is at stake both for you and me, we shall hardly neglect the precautions necessary to secure our own safety."

The sick girl moaned faintly, and tossed up her hands a few times, but these evidences of suffering presently subsided, and she lay as still and death-like as before.

Macon said:

"The first effect of my imbecile powder, as I have christened my preparation, is increased action in the brain, attended by headache; but that will soon pass away, and mental inertia will follow. It will also act upon the physical system, and allay the tendency to fever. It is a marvellous sedative, as you will find."

With a laugh, Mrs. Blake said:

"Your imbecile powder will prove as valuable to us as the *poudre de succession* of the famous French poisoner. It has begun to take effect already, and once under its influence, her fate is absolutely at our disposal."

Macon nodded, and after a pause Mrs. Blake said, in a determined tone:

"In spite of the prohibition of that man in yonder, I must see and speak with him before he dies. While his mind is yet clear enough to comprehend the horror of my presence, I must stand over him, and say that to him which to leave unsaid would deprive me of half my triumph over the man who so basely deserted me."

With impressive earnestness, Macon replied:

"If Hester is to assume the place of Miss Landry, it is desirable to keep life in her father till she again arouses from this death-like sleep. If you insist on seeing him prematurely, the result may be that he will die before our plans are in such a state of progress as to defy detection."

"What limit do you set to her slumbers, and to his life?" she impatiently asked.

"By sunset she will awake, and ask for food. The blow upon her head was not so severe as I have led others to believe for purposes of my own, which you can easily comprehend. But for the precautions I have taken, she would be quite able to go to her father by this time; but you need have no apprehensions of trouble with her. She will be passive in your hands, and all you will be required to do will be to see that her call for nourishment is attended to promptly. Mr. Landry will scarcely live beyond midnight, and by morning Hester must be prepared to take on herself the character she is hereafter to appear in. She must feign sudden and severe illness, and I will give her a preparation which will take all the roses from her cheeks for a few days. She can bind up her head and play the part of the sick girl when the undertaker comes with the coffin; her sister can be taken into the back room, where I have had a bed put up for your use, and even Eunice Barker can be made to believe that she is your own daughter suddenly stricken down with illness."

"As to Eunice, she is too dull to suspect anything, and too much devoted to my daughter to make it known, if she did. I am not afraid of her, and I am going to bring her in here that she may see for herself the remarkable resemblance that exists between Hester and this girl."

"Wait till Miss Landry comes out of this stupor, that Eunice may not be much astonished to-morrow when she finds her double moving about the house and making preparations to go away with her father's dead body."

"That will be best. You wrote those letters to Boston and Newport of which I spoke to you, and then guarded against intrusion from those quarters?"

"Yes; I hardly think the two old ladies of whom you spoke will think it necessary to send any one to look after Mr. Landry and his daughter. I represented them as quite able to take care of themselves."

After a pause of some length, Mrs. Blake said:

"Our programme is settled, and I think it so good a one that it can hardly fail of success. I will defer my interview with Armand Landry till ten to-night. Then I will go in to him and show him that his Nemesis has indeed overtaken him. You have not deceived me as to his condition, Julian? He will live long enough to taste all the bitterness of the cup I will proffer to his dying lips?"

Dr. Macon looked at her as if she was a curious psychological study, but he did not seem to be astonished or revolted by her words. He only said, in curt tones:

"He will live to the hour I have named, and his mind will be clear enough to comprehended all you may desire to say to him."

He moved toward the door which opened on the yard, and after looking out a few moments, said:

"I am looking for my cab, which Simcox was to send back to me. I think it will be as well to meet the messenger and bring it hither myself. The walk will brighten me up, for I begin to feel the effects of my long watch last night."

Mrs. Blake was very glad to be released from his presence for a season, and she assented to his proposal, telling him that he need not return till their dinner hour, which would be at two. They must live as they could.

He lightly replied that it would be no hardship to him to rough it a little when so much was at stake for them, and went on his way toward the gate.

When he was fairly out of it, Mrs. Blake drew forth the desk, and sat down to read the love-letters addressed to the girl beside her. When she saw from whom they came, her eyes flashed, and her breath came almost as quickly as had that of her daughter when she first understood the nature of their contents.

When she had glanced through them sufficiently to understand their general purport, she replaced them, locked the desk, and sat meditating on this new phase of affairs.

"It is a complication I can scarcely see my way out of," she mused. "Luckily the young man is far away, and we have time to act in before he can come upon the scene again. Hester must be safely married to Dr. Macon before he can get back to this country, and he must be left to believe that his love has proved false; yet what a splendid destiny she must forego, to give her hand to a man from whom she recoils! Raymond De Lorme was the playmate of her childhood; he would come to Le Bocage in spite of the prohibition of his haughty mother. Ah, what a triumph it would be to me to know that *my* daughter was his wife, in spite of Mrs. De Lorme's contemptuous scorn of myself. I would risk much to bring about such an alliance, but it is impossible, *impossible*; so why should I dream of it? Poor girl! after all, her fate will not be so enviable as many may think it, when they hereafter see her surrounded by all the trappings that wealth can purchase. The one bitter drop in her cup will be the husband she must take, for there is no escape from him. He has asserted his power in positive terms, and I know he will maintain it."

Thus thinking, she sat near the window which looked out into the yard till she saw Macon returning. He drove up in his cab, and put both horse and carriage under a shed built on one side of the inclosure. He then came in, glanced at Miss Landry, and said:

"I feel better for my walk, and I will now take Hester's place in the other room. I met the cab a mile hence, and sent back the man who brought it, on foot. I do not think that any one else will be apt to come hither today, as I sent word to Simcox that we are getting on very well, and will need no further assistance for the present."

He passed into the adjoining room, and in a few moments Hester came out, looking tired and pale. She sat down on the foot of the bed, and sighed so heavily that her mother hastened to ask:

"What has *he* said to you that has depressed you so much? You have been talking with him since you went in there, I suppose."

"He said very little; talking wearies him, and at any rate he cannot have much more to say to me. I am sorry for him, mother; and but for one thing, I believe I could find it in my heart to refuse to go further in the iniquitous path on which we have set out."

"And what is that thing, pray?" asked Mrs. Blake, in a tone that was both mocking and contemptuous.

Hester looked her clearly in the face, and asked:

"Have you read the letters in that desk?"

"I have; what then?"

"What then? If you do not understand I will tell you," she rapidly said. "I will take my sister's position, her fortune, and—her *lover*, or I will take nothing. The last weighs with me even more than all the rest, for I have not forgotten my early fondness for Raymond, long as we have been separated. As a boy of fourteen he loved me, and I, child as I was, returned his passion. He transferred his allegiance to my sister because she was so much like me that she seemed my second self. I will not permit Raymond De Lorme to think that I have jilted him for such a man as Dr. Macon. I will evade his claims on me at any risk to myself, or any cost to him."

She spoke in a low and guarded tone, but her voice thrilled with passionate excitement, and her mother knew how deeply in earnest she was. There was silence between them a few moments, and then Mrs. Blake spoke in her usual quiet manner:

"This discovery has naturally upset you, Hester, and it is hard on you to be compelled to give up the best possession of your sister. But it must be done, my child. Dr. Macon will prove a ruthless creditor, and unless you pay him all that you have promised, he will become a bitter and remorseless foe. Wealth enjoyed even with him will be better than the narrow and penurious life we must live on the pittance given you, even if you were sure of getting it. The last wishes of your father with reference to yourself are not worth the paper they are written on, unless Estelle Landry regains her mental faculties, and there is no hope of that. Dr. Macon declares that she will be an idiot from this time forth, and I think him quite capable of forming a correct opinion as to her condition."

Hester turned and looked at her sleeping sister. The eyelids of the sick girl were but half closed, and the lustreless orbs that looked out from beneath them, fixed almost as if in death itself, convinced her that her mother spoke the truth. She shuddered violently, and covered her face with her hands a few moments.

When she again looked up she was quite calm, and she coldly said:

"There seems to be no choice left me. I must embrace poverty—labor for my living, and for yours—or consummate this wickedness. I hardly think that I should shrink from it so much, but for the necessity of giving myself to Julian Macon. He has threatened me already with what he will do if I am not true to my pledges. I know what I have to expect at his hands, but I am not afraid of him. I will use him, and then—"

She stopped abruptly, and remained silent so long that Mrs. Blake softly repeated:

"And then, Hester?"

With sudden fierceness she said:

"Then I will deal with him as ruthlessly as he would with me, if I allowed him the chance to do so. Don't question me; don't try to imagine what course I will take. I repeat, I will have *all* that Estelle loses, or I will have nothing. You goad me on to do this wrong, and you will have no right to judge me for that which I may hereafter be tempted to do."

"I shall not judge you for words uttered in a time of such excitement as the present," replied Mrs. Blake, with a faint tremor in her voice. "Situated as you are, there is nothing left for you but to choose between wealth and poverty. A few days hence you will view your position more calmly, and the devotion of Dr. Macon will elicit other feelings in your heart. I am not afraid of your attempting anything that will really offend him or compromise yourself."

"*Offend him!*" repeated Hester, with a scoff. "No; I'll not allow him a chance to feel any such emotion as that toward me. I dare say he thinks I shall be bound to him as a slave to her master when this thing is actually done; but when he least expects it, *I* will show him what I think of our mutual relations, and prove to him that the best laid plans are often brought to naught."

"Such talk is all nonsense, Hester, as no one knows better than yourself. Your fate is written; so why should you gird against it in this senseless way?"

"Senseless, is it? Well, perhaps I am mad; but some day you will find that there's 'method in my madness.' If you think I will submit to be taken to the sacrificial altar as tamely as a sheep, you make a great mistake. I shall find something to immolate, as old Abraham did: in place of outraging my own heart and soul by giving up its dearest and best, I will make a *crime* offering, as an atonement for my sins. That was a delightful privilege afforded to those old Hebrews: they were allowed to wash away their sins with the blood of animals, but with us the sacrifice must be that of a human spirit. I wonder if it matters much whether it is an evil or a good one."

There was a degree of wild levity in her manner that made her mother shiver, callous as she was to pity or remorse. She uneasily said:

"You are talking nonsense now, as no one knows better than yourself. Walk out into the woodland, and the fresh air will take the tension from your nerves, and steady them for the ordeal through which you must soon pass. Don't risk losing all we are playing for, Hester, by becoming hysterical just as you need the subtlest command of your senses."

"Oh, I shall be all right when the time comes. I have no nerves to speak of, and I don't intend to let them trouble me as those of Lady Macbeth did after she attained all she sinned for. It was very weak in her not to enjoy the reward of her crime in peace and comfort. I wonder she did not try her hand again, for I sometimes think there must be something fascinating in making others shift off this 'mortal coil;' witness Lucrezia Borgia and Madame Brinvilliers. But I won't shock you any further, *Madame Mère*. I'll go out and hear the birds chirping in the trees, listen to the rippling brook, and try to interpret what the leaves are saying to each other."

She arose while speaking in this wild way, and throwing on her hat, went out and crossed the yard at a rapid pace. She went far away from the farm-house, and sat down on the edge of a little stream that flowed through the woodland, to think. The little that was good in her was rapidly dying out under the influences brought to bear upon her: she began to feel the interest of the gamester, who has everything at stake in the dice he is throwing, and she told herself that for her there was nothing in the future, unless it was won by her own skill and craft. Would she be to blame if she grasped the glittering prize held out to her? Estelle would live on, a harmless nonentity; then why should she not take her place, and wear her honors bravely, without casting a regretful thought to the manner in which they had been won?

The hours rolled on almost unheeded, but she finally awoke to the consciousness that noon was long past, and it must be time for her to return to the duties she had undertaken to perform to her father.

She retraced her steps, quite composed and resolute now, and ready for the part she had to play. She thought she had arranged the whole drama, and distributed the parts to suit her own views, and she was ready to fight the battle to the end, with such weapons as fate and chance might furnish her.

As Hester drew near the house, Dr. Macon came out to meet her. He said:

"It is time for our dinner, and I was coming in search of you. You have been absent a long time, but luckily Mr. Landry did not ask for you. I have explained to you what must be done to-night, Hester. Here are some drops I have prepared for you, which will make you pallid enough to personate the girl who lies in yonder, and you must take them when you lie down at bedtime. They will not injuriously affect you, though for a season they will banish the roses from your cheeks. It will be as well, perhaps, for you to complain to the dumb girl that the sun has affected your head while you have been out. Sunstrokes are not uncommon at this season of the year, and one would easily account for your sham illness."

Hester laughed lightly as she took the bottle.

"Your fertile brain enables you to turn everything to account, Julian. I am sure I had no design in staying out so long but to think my own thoughts; but you make capital out of my heedlessness in a way that seems really wonderful to me."

Macon smiled down on her in that superior way which fatuous men are addicted to when a compliment, however equivocal, is offered to them. He rather pompously said:

"Since I am to be your guide and guard in the future, it is fortunate that I have the qualities which must command your admiration and respect. Hand in hand we shall win a great future, Hester; but like the Persian's bundle of sticks, we should be of no value apart. I believe you have come to feel that, my angel."

"Two sticks don't make a bundle, and I don't know that I like to be compared to a stick, at any rate," she half petulantly said. "Suppose I prove an evil angel to you; what would you do in that case?"

He steadily regarded her a moment, and then dryly said:

"I think that you will find it to your interest to be a good one to me. What I would do if the reverse happened, I need not attempt to set forth. I should be guided by the exigencies of the case. When you are my wife, we shall understand each other better, and the bond that will bind us together will not be one that can be lightly broken."

"So much the better for such true lovers as we are," she carelessly replied, as she concealed the bottle he had given her in the pocket of her dress, and went into the house.

Hester took in the panada which had been prepared for her father, and carefully fed him herself, while Macon and her mother partook of the repast Eunice had placed on the tall box, after spreading a napkin over it.

Mr. Landry was induced to eat a few morsels, but he complained of a difficulty in swallowing even those.

"The end cannot be far off," he wearily said. "Is Estelle sensible yet? Ah, if I could only exchange a few words with her, I should die better contented."

"She sleeps yet. Don't worry yourself on my account, sir; I shall do very well, I have no doubt."

With a heavy sigh, he turned his face to the wall and said no more, and Hester left him again alone.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—Men's feelings are always purest and most glowing in the hour of meeting and of farewell; like the glaciers, which are transparent and rosy-hued only at sunrise and sunset, but throughout the day gray and cold.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A HIGH-TEMPERED husband quarrelled with his wife the other morning, and getting the worst of it, he took his razor from his box and threatened to sever his jugular vein. His daughter fell on her knees and begged him to desist, but he wouldn't do it. "Let the old fool cut his throat if he wants to!" exclaimed his wife. "Oh, that's what you want, is it?" retorted the husband. "Well, I was determined to get the best of you somehow, and now I'll do it," he added, as he carefully replaced the razor in its box.

A DANDY whose clothes were highly scented with perfumes, looked disdainfully at a country looking man who took a seat beside him at a concert. The latter observing the sneer, said, in an audible voice, "I say, mister, there's no use of your carrying that smell about with you. You just bury them clothes o' yourn in the sand for about a week, and they'll smell as good as mine." The dandy was extinguished.

"I NEVER go to church," said an irreverent man to a pious lady; "I always spend Sunday in settling accounts." "There is another day," said the lady, "that will be spent in the same way." "What day is that?" asked the man. "The Day of Judgment," was the solemn reply.

A WEALTHY but miserly old man, dining down town one day with his son at a restaurant, whispered in his ear, "Tom, you must eat for to-day and to-morrow." "O yes," retorted the half-starved lad, "but I ha'n't eaten for yesterday and the day before, yet, father!"

A MAN objected to paying for a death notice in a newspaper, and demanded, "Why should marriage and death notices be paid for, any how?" "Because," replied the heartless publisher, "one is a notice of copartnership and the other of dissolution. Business is business."

"PRAY bestow your charity, young gentleman, on a poor blind man," said a beggar to a person passing by. "If you are blind, my good fellow, how did you know I was young?" "Oh, sir, I beg your pardon, I made a mistake; pray give a trifle to a poor dumb man."

"How do you expect to get through that great drift with such a little shovel?" asked a gentleman of a small boy who, with a small shovel, was working at a huge bank of snow. "By sticking to it," was the quiet reply of the little fellow, as he shovelled away.

A BLIND woman in Iowa having learned to thread a cambric needle with her teeth and tongue, an old bachelor exclaims, "That is not to be wondered at, for I should like to know what there is in this world that a woman's tongue can't do—or undo!"

AN elderly millionaire, being pestered with all manner of applications for money, says, "I was good-natured once; but I beg to state, in the most positive terms, that I am now old, tired, very ill-natured, and want that fact generally known."

"WHAT makes you so glum, Tom?" "Because I've just had to endure a sad trial to my feelings." "What on earth was it?" "Why, I had to sit on a pretty girl's bonnet while her mother was looking on."

A LEGISLATIVE or congressional bribe is now called "a pecuniary compliment," and it is the regular thing to "take it in the same spirit in which it is offered."

To flatter people adroitly one must know three things: what they really are, what they think they are, and what they want other people to think they are.

A SNOB once asked an honest laboring man what part he performed in the great drama of life. "I mind my own business and pay my way," was the reply.

A LITTLE girl wanting a fan, but not being able to remember the word, said she "wanted a thing to brush the warmth off with."

"MAMMA, do you know what the largest species of ants are? You shake your head. Well, I'll tell. They're eleph-ants."

WHEN is a school-boy like a postage stamp? When he gets licked and put in a corner to make him stick to his letters.

MOTTO for a ferry-boat cabin—If passengers expect to rate as gentlemen, they must not expectorate on this floor.

CAN a girl with a *taper* waist be said to have a *light* figure?

WHAT is the oldest woman's club? The broomstick.

LIP service—Tea-cups and saucers.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A PENNSYLVANIAN, recently deceased, who was supposed to be wealthy, occasioned much disappointment and annoyance to his relatives and intimate friends by leaving them handsome legacies in his will, in some cases consisting of bank stock or government bonds, and in others of city property or large tracts of land, whereas he, in fact, was not worth ten thousand dollars—the bank stock, bonds, city property and tracts of land having no existence save in his imagination. It is now supposed that he had become insane on the subject of property.

A COLORED woman, probably the largest and heaviest person of her sex in the world, died in St. Louis, about two weeks ago, at the age of fifty-one years. The almost incredible statement is made that she weighed between nine hundred and one thousand pounds, was five feet ten inches in height, and twenty-eight inches across the shoulders, and that her arms were thirty inches in circumference. It took eight men and six rollers combined to lower her from the wagon into her grave.

A MAN was recently discharged from the Rhode Island Penitentiary, after eight years' imprisonment, it having been ascertained that he was entirely innocent of the crime charged against him. After his release, the General Assembly of the State voted him two hundred dollars as a compensation for the injustice that had been done him, which was just twenty-five dollars a year for hard work, prison fare, and no privileges. That was certainly poor pay.

A FEW days ago a suspicious citizen of Newburyport discovered a newly made grave in the woods at East Salisbury, and summoning a policeman and one of the Selectmen of Salisbury, proceeded to solve the mystery. Digging down a few feet, the party discovered a box, and inside the box an elegant casket, and inside the casket a dog lying on his back, with his fore-paws curled up. They didn't send for a coroner.

A LAZY negro boy at Louisville, Ky., who was hired to hold a horse in pasture, tied the rope to his arm and lay down on the grass. A train of cars approaching, frightened the horse, and he started off, dragging the boy after him. The horse was not stopped for some time, as the boy dragging after him frightened him as much as the train of cars did. The boy was terribly mangled, and soon died.

A FEW days ago, at Memphis, Tenn., railroad trains were detained by vast numbers of caterpillars lying on the tracks, the wheels of the cars crushing the insects, and the tracks becoming in consequence so slippery that the wheels would not turn. The woods in the neighborhood and in some other localities in the State are completely stripped of their foliage by those pests.

A FEW Sundays ago, a boy in Rochester was detected in the act of fishing money out of the contribution box in the vestry of a church, with two long sticks, whereby the scrip was dexterously extracted from the box to be transferred to the pockets of the sinful angler. The Sunday before he had secured $10 in this way.

A HARVARD Freshman is reported to have disappeared, leaving over $1,500 of debts to confiding classmates, boarding-house keepers and tailors. Investigations show that the name by which he was known in Cambridge was fictitious, and that he had played the same game at Trinity College, Hartford.

ON the 5th of April last, a traveller passed through Lincoln county, Maine, over roads having three feet of snow; ten days later he went the same way on roads bare of snow, and saw teams plowing in the fields. The change of season this year is somewhat remarkable for its rapidity.

ACCORDING to the census of 1870, during that year, in Massachusetts, six girls were married at fourteen, thirty-three at fifteen, and one hundred and eighty at sixteen. A woman of sixty was also married for the fourth time.

A WRITER who has been investigating the subject, says the whole number of Siberian exiles, a large proportion of whom have been banished without the least shadow of a trial, is nearly three hundred and fifty thousand.

A TWELVE-YEAR-OLD boy of this city found a loaded revolver in his father's room, and while he was playing with it it went off, and the ball entering the brain of his little brother, only two years old, inflicted a fatal wound.

A RESIDENT of Middlesex, Vt., was burned to death on Saturday of last week, as he was trying to save some of the contents of his house, which was in flames.

THE HEROIC MOTHER'S JOY.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Stark and white they lay before him,
They, his only sons, there slain
By the red-footed Border lightning,
In their valor-flight amain.
There they stretch, with stone-cold bosoms,
Where the battle-tempest blew;
Hands clinched firm, as if unbroken
Even in the hush of death.

Sign! looks that old Indian mother,
Sat a tear in her fixed eye?
On her this time not a drop now
As they there before her lie.
At last, in an awful moment, lifted
Up to Heaven, Hist! for see!
"Thank God, they have done their duty,
And the brave sons did they be!"

But the other day this tyrant,
Who, with that red demon said,
"Let there be freedom already
Over all the land!" and
And it has a chance to unfold!
That no centuries can destroy,
Which no ages can annoy,
"Thy friend, Brother, Joy."

Great Republic, in the centuries
For that dazed old mother's eyes,
So that it may have broad room
At last, in an age-sad place,
Tender thanks of her most stranded,
Her most heart-wrung race,
Because they'd been a mother
To the Heroic Mother's Joy!

"An incident in the late terrible murder of United States officers in Kansas, by the settlers there in the Cherokee Nation.

BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "SELF-MADE," "THE BROTHER," ETC.

CHAPTER CXIX.

HOW EMMA HEARD THE NEWS.

As stand grave,
Chorus of fate, with her immortal voice,
Unto the listening earth.
Milton.

It was eleven o'clock that night when the Rev. Mr. Lyle and Mr. Rowland arrived at Cliffs, on their return from Wendover.

Of course all the guests of the bridal reception had long since gone away. The house was closed for the night, and everybody had retired except those of the family, where the gentlemen found the two ladies sitting up, and awaiting their return.

"Where is Aldert? Is he not with you?" anxiously inquired Emma, after the first greetings.

"Our friend might certainly have come back with us if he had chosen to do so; but he thought it best to remain and see Mr. Lyle's daughter, and be agreed with him. He is at my house," answered the rector.

"I have something painful to tell you. I beg you will tell it at once," said Emma, turning very pale, but controlling herself perfectly and speaking with calmness.

"Something painful, if I were not so outrageous, I should say, dear Mrs. Lydon. But it is light in the parlor."

"Come!"

Then come with me there, and I will tell you all about it," answered Mr. Lyle, speaking cheerfully, as he offered his arm to Emma.

And she and there he told the whole history of the charge that had been brought against her husband, and of the result of the preliminary examinations.

Emma listened in unspeakable grief, horror, amazement and mortification. Yet with the most strong emotions struggling in her bosom, she controlled herself so far as to preserve her outward composure, and remained calm and quiet.

"And Mary Grey claims to be his wife? I should think the woman was raving mad, but for the plausible testimony she has managed to bring together. And it is well for her to look upon this in the same light that you do, my dear Mrs. Lydon—for she has found some shadow of foundation for her claims; it must be only the embarrassment and confusion of a few days, and then the whole will vanish like a vapor."

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER

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ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1872.

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The Searching Question—What shall it Profit a Man?

"What shall it profit a man," asks our Saviour, "though he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

It is well for young men, just starting in life, to keep this question constantly before them, as the guiding star to their future business career. If they heed its admonition, it will be sure to direct their feet aright. It implies that men may take advantage of the world, and will not profit them, and that riches may be accumulated at too great cost.

Some persons try to compensate for making money wrongfully by applying a portion of it to benevolent objects. They seem to think that ten per cent. off for good conscience is a sense for any amount of sin.

All such standards of morality are illusory and erroneous. Every transaction in business must stand or fall by its own quality. The same test must be applied to it which would be the correct one if it were the only act of a man's life. We know that it is not possible to act but what authority is there for adopting any other? However difficult it may be, therefore, it is our duty to square our conduct to it.

But principles which appear to be very hard to be complied with, become comparatively easy when once fully adopted and adhered to with unwavering firmness of mind. Let a young man begin right, and the road before him is smooth as well as straight.

If it is wrong, I will not do it, no matter what is the temptation; let him say this to himself and the battle of resistance is already half won. Let him resolve in his mind the source from which the creation came—that it was asked by one who knew the awful unhappiness of the iniquity—"What shall it profit a man, though he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

It matters not what the amount of the advantage may be, even if it were the whole world, it shall not profit a man to gain it by any violation of his covenant with his Maker, who has nothing, and feels that he has wronged no man, that the possessor of bread acres and of millions of dollars dishonestly acquired. Whatever advantages may appear to possess, there is something also of a still higher order.

On the Wrong Side of the Bride.

A man named COON was recently tried in New Jersey for polygamy. One of the witnesses to his first marriage testified that she remembered about the ceremony was that "Coon got on the wrong side of the bride."

ALEXANDER MCKEY, another witness, who married a sister of Coon's, was followed by lacking in precision in his recollections of his own marriage, its boldness, etc. He "testified that he lived at Elizabeth; he married Coon's sister; could not tell how long he had been married; he had three or four children; there were four when he (emphatically) took the stand; he was married at his wife's father's house; was at Stoney Hill; don't know where it was, or in what county; he was a sailing man; when he went to see his wife he took a train on the Morris and Essex, got out at Madison and tramped across the country to Mr. COON'S house."

How Hard to Bear!

There are some who cannot join in the petition to be "delivered from sudden death." Our own prolonged physical pain of body, and the final parting with those we love, have rested upon us—O how hard to bear! This seals more faith and courage than many a true Christian can always summon, although he can truthfully answer Yes to the searching question, "Lovest thou Me?"

An Old Subscriber.

MR. JOEL DUNHAM, of Raritan, New Jersey, recently called at the office of the *New Brunswick Fredonian* to pay his *fifty-second* annual subscription to that journal.

We hope the *Ledger* will one day number on its books many subscribers who will call and pay us their subscription at the beginning of their fifty-second year.

The Kinds of Giving.

There is more virtues in the small pittance bestowed by some poor, hard-working servant in charity, than in the large sums given by some millionaire, whose generosity is transcended the breath and breadth of the land. In truth it might be questioned, in many instances, whether it were right to receive the price so hardly earned, were it not that in this lesson of self-sacrifice "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

A Sweet Nuisance.

In these spy how bursting on the jingling now-bells attached to the rag carts that infest our streets? If so, in the name of the sick people who are tortured by them, let it be speedily enforced. Both the sick and the unsickened have suffered long enough from their jangling discord.

What will Happen if it does Not Rain.

Whenever there has been an unusual length of time without rain, the people in the country are in the habit of complaining and wondering what will happen if the weather continues so dry. Indeed not suppose no one to them that the weather is in good hands, that it is sure to be well managed, and that there are plenty of other things which they might busy themselves about more advantageously. At all events, it is much better which they do to worry themselves about that.

It will rain, and rain in due time; that may always be depended upon. Such a thing as a general failure of crops in this part of the world, from drought or any other cause, is unknown. In the product of some particular article, as hay, or corn, or wheat, or oats, there is occasionally a great difference, in seasons, and more or less variation in the amount every age; but we always have enough of something.

There are some practical objections to the practice of complaining about the weather. In the first place, the habit of fretfulness, on any subject, is a dangerous one.

Again, those who are always finding fault with the weather are very apt to neglect many things which they might do to guard against the injurious effects of its extremes. The farmer who frets about and cultivates thirsty, finds the moisture below which his indolent neighbor sighs for in vain from above.

Finally there seems to us something irreverent, if not impious, in a presumptuous criticism of that which is conducted with a wisdom which is not only superhuman, but even above human comprehension.

Found Dead in His Bed.

In these latter days, the above heading appears in the daily papers with an alarming and impressive frequency. There seems to be no part of the country which is exempt from the sudden visitation of death. In the remotest hamlets, as well as in the most crowded cities, people who are in the enjoyment of good living and health, are found dead in their beds in the morning. It is thus a cause for wonder that one whose bed is a heap of rags in the basement of a tenement house in the crowded New York, should be found dead in it. The wonder is that we do not hear more often of persons who have gone to sleep in the open fields, or in the streets, or in the most wretched places of death. It is a very common saying, thinking that the world is bright enough, and that life is a blessing, and that it is a pity that they should ever die. But when the day comes, it is a very different thing. Then the rich man, who has been clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, is found dead in his bed, and the beggar who has been carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. So also with the rich and famous, who have been accustomed to the luxuries of life, and the poor and obscure, who have been accustomed to the hardships of life. Death has a longer reach and a wider sway than was vouchsafed to the Roman emperors, and it never intermits its work. It is as true as Cæsar was himself long since found dead in his bed.

A West Indian Massacre.

The captain of the schooner *Fleet*, who recently arrived at Boston from the Spanish West Indies, brings intelligence of a whole sale massacre on that island, which involves the worst cases of homicide in New York into the shade. A gentleman, who was connected with a French settlement of St. Peters, early on the morning of the month, saw three men and a woman coming up the hill to the house. Supposing them to be friends, he went out to join them, when he was met by a shower of bullets, which, good for nothing in the market, yet were of such a size as to make a wound more than could golden dollars or donuts.

The gentleman fell dead, and his wife, out of my window, and thank God for the sight of the sky, the trees, the flowers, the fellows! Do they know my thoughts as I gaze on them? Do they know my heart? Do they know my love? Do they know how I feel to dollar, and the soul then sprang from the body. Another gentleman, named John Ledgler, and in it had been murdered. Their bodies were frightfully mangled. They had been robbed of millions of francs—about one million two hundred thousand dollars—in specie and bank drafts. Finally, the murderers were a man and two negresses. The latter were hung, and the two accomplices. They were sent to France for trial.

A Carnivorous Mule.

Boone county, Missouri, is represented as a remarkably fertile region. If its other products are in keeping with the mule we have from that quarter, they must be unrivalled.

Witness the following account of a sheep eating mule, which we find in the county paper:

"Mr. Fred. Jones, residing some eight miles south-west of this place, is the owner of a mule which, to the horror of the neighbors, it appears, has a taste for mutton. Mr. Jones has supposed that the dogs or wolves were devouring his sheep; but the following incident, which occurred on the 30th inst., has put the matter beyond a doubt. Mr. Jones had penned up a number of sheep, and the mule he was engaged in making a meal on sheep and goat meat. Mr. Jones, on discovering the fact, shot the animal dead. Upon examination, the mule was found to have eaten a number of sheep and goats entirely, and a part of several others."

Death from Joy.

There have been many instances of death from excessive joy. Many years ago a distinguished lawyer of the United States Senate died and expired on hearing announced the passage of a measure in which he had been deeply interested.

A few days ago an old gentleman from Indiana arrived at Saugerties and was so overjoyed at seeing his son once more, that he fainted and died.

Flower Thieves.

It is little comfort, in New York, to cultivate beautiful flowers, shrubs or trees, as no precaution avails against the thieving fingers of female marauders, which carry off every bud or blossom, that is within reach, unless the owner would be a good deal of a policeman to make an example or two of these children, to warn the rest. Nothing seems to be without regard to their dress, parentage, or social position.

A Sheep Charmed by a Snake.

[From the Pendleton(S. C.) Farmer.]

A sheep, owned by a son of Mr. J. G. Fulton, at Mosgrop Valley, Cluster county, was charmed by a rattle snake. The animal was observed by Mr. Fulton apart from the flock, standing in a peculiar attitude so long, near a ledge of rocks, that he went to see what was the matter, when he discovered a rattle snake coiled at the foot of the ledge, and fixed its gaze upon the sheep. On approaching the snake, it would not move, but kept its eye fixed, and finally fled to the woods, none which time it has been neither seen nor heard of.

ALL HAIL!

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

There are many charms connected with the ideal life of the tropics. The chief drawback is, that somehow deliciousness and ease are not the Equator. This is not paid for by luscious bananas, oranges, cocoas, cocoa-nuts, growing vines and trees. Enjoyment palls when it is not accompanied with activity. Tropic life is summer for ever, without one negative. At all events, it is hard work which the people we know, eats us with sweetness.

To toil rain, and rain is due time; that may always be depended upon. Such a thing as a general failure of crops in this part of the world, from drought or any other cause, is unknown. In the product of some particular article, as hay, or corn, or wheat, or oats, there is occasionally a great difference, in seasons, and more or less variation in the amount every age; but we always have enough of something.

There are some practical objections to the practice of complaining about the weather. In the first place, the habit of fretfulness, on any subject, is a dangerous one.

Again, those who are always finding fault with the weather are very apt to neglect many things which they might do to guard against the injurious effects of its extremes. The farmer who frets about and cultivates thirsty, finds the moisture below which his indolent neighbor sighs for in vain from above.

Finally there seems to us something irreverent, if not impious, in a presumptuous criticism of that which is conducted with a wisdom which is not only superhuman, but even above human comprehension.

Found Dead in His Bed.

In these latter days, the above heading appears in the daily papers with an alarming and impressive frequency. There seems to be no part of the country which is exempt from the sudden visitation of death. In the remotest hamlets, as well as in the most crowded cities, people who are in the enjoyment of good living and health, are found dead in their beds in the morning. It is thus a cause for wonder that one whose bed is a heap of rags in the basement of a tenement house in the crowded New York, should be found dead in it. The wonder is that we do not hear more often of persons who have gone to sleep in the open fields, or in the streets, or in the most wretched places of death. It is a very common saying, thinking that the world is bright enough, and that life is a blessing, and that it is a pity that they should ever die. But when the day comes, it is a very different thing. Then the rich man, who has been clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, is found dead in his bed, and the beggar who has been carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. So also with the rich and famous, who have been accustomed to the luxuries of life, and the poor and obscure, who have been accustomed to the hardships of life. Death has a longer reach and a wider sway than was vouchsafed to the Roman emperors, and it never intermits its work. It is as true as Cæsar was himself long since found dead in his bed.

A West Indian Massacre.

The captain of the schooner *Fleet*, who recently arrived at Boston from the Spanish West Indies, brings intelligence of a whole sale massacre on that island, which involves the worst cases of homicide in New York into the shade. A gentleman, who was connected with a French settlement of St. Peters, early on the morning of the month, saw three men and a woman coming up the hill to the house. Supposing them to be friends, he went out to join them, when he was met by a shower of bullets, which, good for nothing in the market, yet were of such a size as to make a more than could golden dollars or donuts.

The gentleman fell dead, and his wife, out of my window, and thank God for the sight of the sky, the trees, the flowers, the fellows! Do they know my thoughts as I gaze on them? Do they know my heart? Do they know my love? Do they know how I feel to dollar, and the soul then sprang from the body. Another gentleman, named John Ledgler, and in it had been murdered. Their bodies were frightfully mangled. They had been robbed of millions of francs—about one million two hundred thousand dollars—in specie and bank drafts. Finally, the murderers were a man and two negresses. The latter were hung, and the two accomplices. They were sent to France for trial.

A Carnivorous Mule.

Boone county, Missouri, is represented as a remarkably fertile region. If its other products are in keeping with the mule we have from that quarter, they must be unrivalled.

Witness the following account of a sheep eating mule, which we find in the county paper:

"Mr. Fred. Jones, residing some eight miles south-west of this place, is the owner of a mule which, to the horror of the neighbors, it appears, has a taste for mutton. Mr. Jones has supposed that the dogs or wolves were devouring his sheep; but the following incident, which occurred on the 30th inst., has put the matter beyond a doubt. Mr. Jones had penned up a number of sheep, and the mule he was engaged in making a meal on sheep and goat meat. Mr. Jones, on discovering the fact, shot the animal dead. Upon examination, the mule was found to have eaten a number of sheep and goats entirely, and a part of several others."

Death from Joy.

There have been many instances of death from excessive joy. Many years ago a distinguished lawyer of the United States Senate died and expired on hearing announced the passage of a measure in which he had been deeply interested.

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THE FIVE KNAVES.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

Once on a time, in Indostan,
A thief conceived a cunning plan,
By which he hoped to gain a store
Of jewels from the Rajah's door.
Through how the day was dawning nigh
When he to go was dressed to die.
He bade the jailer tell the King
That he would tell a curious thing—
A pleasing secret, fairly worth
The ear of any prince on earth.
The King, whose mind was filled with care,
Into the royal presence, said
That he would hear what he had to say,
Whose fate—increased a hundred fold—
Will be—like the—the purest gold
I pray your Majesty to try!
The King replied, "Now, by my life!
With this, the King and courtiers went
Into the garden with intent
To hear the secret of the thief,
But how, when all was ready brief
The prisoner said, "Your Majesty,
I would verily spoil my whole design,
The hand that plants the gold must be
Close all in naughty ordinary row.
From stain of fraud; and in I pray
That all the Five may kneel with me,
And in each ear,
The King replied, "Go—go—go, south!"
The King replied, "for in any youth
I gathered from the royal train,
For all my service, may remain.
Then, with a cunning leer, he said
In hand, no doubt, in their style
Of any talent." "Nay," he replied,
"Such a—thing—I—do—not—desire,
As Tax-Receiver—none—I may
Be free to—do—as I—may—please
To rule—and—as I—please—to—rule,
And let our Commissary take
Such sum as best he may see fit,
For his—in deed, can stand the test."
The King, with a—well-pleased look
Of startling—surprise, cried, "Can! Why!
My good intent; but since I pay
Large sums to—answer every day
My—orders, salaries, and a host
Of—other—things, I—do—not—see
I have not pay a cent for—this!"
Not entered in my book account.
"Nay," said the thief, "I—do—not—want
Would spoil the charm, pray let the Prince
Who—gives—the—gold—pay—me!" The King
Says, that I have not—received
Despite my prayers and pious zeal,"
Replied the King, "I—do—not—see
As I for—you—will—do—less
Than—for—the—Prince—I—will—pay—you!"
Then—with—a—smile—he—said—to—him,
"Where nothing must be done amiss."
The thief replied, "Your Majesty,
As—he—is—to—receive—the—interest,
Or—hazards—risk; I ask you whether
He—should—not—be—consulted—also?"
The monarch, laughing, made reply,
"Why—that—is—fair—enough—I—think—
Then—to—the—Prince—I—will—refer—you,
I pardon you—and spare the rest!"

AN UNRELIABLE COMET.

BY JUDGE CLARK.

We were a block of passengers on a snow-bound train, on the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad. A prospect of soon getting under way was not encouraging, and our spirits and our tongues going.

After an interchange of views on the recession to the Presidency, and several other topics, the subject of comets was introduced. Professor O'Brion introduced the Plautamour Comet.

"What would be the effect on the earth or collision with such a body?" asked a substantial looking gentleman, with, probably, a local-owner's interest to the question.

"I cannot say," said the professor, in the opinion of a passenger, who appealed, in support of it, to "Webster's Unabridged," on the New Era Railroad.

"Some say its population to a cond-ons stage," shouted Mr. Uglyhead.

The Professor, shocked at this verbal atrocity, looked daggers at the interruption through his spectacles.

"What is most repugnant," said the Senator—we had one among us—"what is most repugnant to the principles of a free government is the thought that it would leave us without a President. Now, I am in favor of the most advanced discussion can afford to meet death under ordinary circumstances, with composure, but this fills me with dismay. But to blot out the race, obliterate history, and generate our places with those in a lower, able, sir, and I protest against it! But I beg your pardon, Professor. We were all very much your views."

The Professor's views were far too numerous to mention. Enough to say he agreed to be learned, might be solid, or they might be quaint. They might be reliable, or they might not. They might collide with other bodies, or they might not. They might be the cause of collision with our globe, it would be a question of probabilities. Science was a thing which would get the worst of it. It guessed, and it reckoned, and it calculated, and it figured, and it deduced inductively and deductively, and it was all very well for astrologers, but other scientific Rhadyks, knew too much to know anything. He hinted give you all the theories, but which was the true one was other matter entirely.

If one only had reliable private information that a comet would strike the earth, or that it would not, it would be "neat" might be said by selling short." Or, if one could only get a good bet on it, or even a bet.

"Don't you never try that, stranger?" broke in a voice from the dignity of a "bunk." "Don't you never go for to risk your money on a comet, no how."

"Why not?" asked the broker.

"Because it's a mean critter to bet on. Starts at as a general expression of curiosity, and all eyes were turned to the orphan, ragged boy.

"If the year eighteen hundred and thirty-odd," in the owner of a valley, "and I calculated in what is now the heart of Leginpike' I had a farm that I, to sell, and I was a-goin' to Injianny. But that year a comet was a-goin' to appear, and I was told that it was a-goin' to run against the earth and sink it, and all the cussers on true orthodox principles, and I sold my farm for a good deal more than it was worth, got up to keep Dimsgreats from the polls, and I went to Injianny to watch a friend of Hicky's as never scratched a ticket, got up a big meetin' in the state House, and had faith in the Elder. Sent a store room and provisions for a month, and when the day of the comet arrived I was ready for it. Had provisions enough to feed a good deal jolum, and Bill Jones and his family and I sat down to a bunch of green oats in his hand.

"Well, we waited, and the sun this season? Bill, switchin' his leg with the handful he had.

"Not petrikkin,' as I, 'more'n to observe as we've got to keep on a-waitin'.

"Why, as about a quarter to four I see the comet was pointed right for us. 'It's comin across a sulphur.' You've done that letterin' yourself,' sez I.

"Dog my cat of I did!' sez Bill. 'Just you look at those yer,' sez he, holdin' out the end of the bunch; 'ain' just come out to be fold, and you'll find the same on every spear that's growin'.'

"Sure enough it was so! What that Bill stood for there was no mistakin'. There was only one thing it could stand for, an' that was 'Green.'

"Goin' back to the house, I passed through the barn-yard, an' stopped to take a look into the goose nest, where I found an egg as second.

I picked it up to fetch it along, when I said somethin' else in my family name, 'cept mine my bad self.' May I never again be there wash's for the rest of my days, unless, which was part of the deal, some industrious woman'll seek as it' egg-cousers—this partikkil'r egg—to lay by for me during the rest of my natural, as under o'clock punctual.'

"It did take a better scholar nor me to describe my feelin's. When I got to the house, I sed nothin' to my wife; for I know'd, of she found out the comet was comin' in sirnest, she'd be a-goin' on like a mad woman, so I did.

"That night I bought a pistol from Bill Potter'd been dickerin' at me for some time to buy my property, and I asked a extra price an acre, an' I'd been bodin' out for ten. My wife too'd has a touch of me to sell an' move to town. She'd an ambition, you see, to be as one as Up Windsor, Where mankind kept the village grocery.

"Well, I says my mind I'd walk over in the mornin' an' take Jake up—that is, you-vellin' he'd quake it cash down, an' no luck payments. I was a little afraid he mought get a hearn about what was onto the onto, an' so he offed; but Jake, I know'd, was an onbelievin' critter, an' the important secret of the egg lay in my own breast.

"I felt as if I could die contentedder of I'd gathered from the sale of my farm, an' I pictered to myself the comet a-comin' an' astonish mankind in general, I should be a-lyin' in my rural shanty, with my wife a-lyin' in my rural shanty, with my wife's first sense to git even with him.

"Jake was a long-winded cuss at me comin' to his terms so easy; but he jounced at the price, an' I was back in my shanty by dinner, paid the same day.

"Well, we moved into town, my wife an' me; an' my wife—to keep quiet in the family, I s'pose—she let me have my own way in all the shine and fixin's. I bought a house, an' I concluded I'd let her in whenever she wanted; an' made believe, for a kind of a joke, to go in pernicious speculation, though I took care to close on that egg. I'd a notion I'd like to have the good o' my money, an' come out square in the long run.

"On the appointed day, my wife went out to see the comet, and I went with her. I'd hymn-book an' a lookin'-glass with me, an' between the two we was soon lost to airthly consideration.

"The next sensation I experienced was of bein' awoke by a crash, and of bein' hit on by some. The first I attributed to the comet, the second to Bill Jones, who had followed my private information, and had got up a-top of me. I never could tell which was which, for Pop had on a new bonnet, just imported from New York, and Bill Jones was a-lyin' over my wife.

"Every one fifty dollars this minute!" she screamed. "I'll teach that good-for-nothin' thing to deceive me!" and she was off for the nearest train to New York, as quick as hoss an' ocean power could take her, an' I never seed her again.

"Fifty dollars!—I'd invested my last fifty dollars in that egg, an' I looked at the clock. It was past three, an' the comet was due at four.

"What passed between me an' my wife, Bill Jones, an' the comet, in the next hour, was as a heaps of hardship to imagine. An hour never seemed so long. I'd no watch, an' I'd no means of knowin' the time.

"That insurrection on the egg," remarked the Professor, "was a most unusual way of nature though."

"That's riddlestick!" exclaimed the stranger. "All a put up job between Jake an' Bill Jones, an' the comet, to get that egg. I'll bet a hundred to a boy, cash of the program. And I'll bet a hundred to a boy, cash, that that egg which's sat down the shell, except where it's been hatched, an' I'll bet a third that that goose egg that way," an' I was goose enough to bet it, too."

But the bitter on the cats?" queried the broker.

"Bitter, stranger?" said the other, with a mark, somethin' like a R. I reckon 'been onto many kinds of cats an' many kinds of bitter foundations of the world, only I never noticed 'em."

"I trust you have succeeded in repairing your fortunes," said the disinterested Professor.

"Well, I was hanged about from pillar to post for a year, an' I was a-goin' to commit a big one for I struck a streak o' luck at last," giving another look at the clock, "an' next comes an' I take stock in 'U hev to come close enough for me to sprinkle salt on the tail."

THE NEW ENGLAND WOMAN.

What is the New England woman? What is the New England woman? How can you know her? First, by her wardrobe. She will own a water-proof cloak, a thick shawl, and a warm hood before thinking about a diamond ring, or the last style of a Parisian bonnet. She always dresses with a view to the thermometer. She wears leaders as a basis of silk—the best fabric, under doubtful skies, to a silk velvet dress and sparkling jewels.

Before deciding on her spring outfit, she looks at the quadrature of the dresses already in her wardrobe, and then goes to a dress maker, places a bow, or ruffle; over another, a novelty above the dress she has worn all winter, and has dresses at least. She buys the materials for two bonnets, and then trusts to chance and the garnishing of flowers and feathers, quite confidently of an elegant success. She buys her own boots and shoes for all kinds of weather, before being introduced to a custom tailor; also a good assortment of plain but handsome underclothing. She never thinks of after a real Cashmere shawl.

She owns a good family Bible, though not owning a "point-lace overdress" for a party. She has a Bible, because the spirit of the day and the occasion, according to the best of her knowledge, and she reads it, and finds in it the best rules for her conduct, and the best apologizing for not being dressed in a different manner. In short, she is a woman of wide fastefully arrayed for the hour, her mind has been cultivated to the highest point of her opportunity to consider more important needs, and she is the glory of her husband, and the delight of her friends, and would look a leading comedy all bashed, if you could see her in her own home, and in the midst of her own duties, how she believes it, or turns you the cold shoulder.

The New England woman puts away her faith before God, and her trust in her father and her flour is as clean as that of her partner. She is not a fool, as you can perceive by the cast of her sense of the weaknesses of her husband. She is a woman, and a New England woman. I myself am a New England woman.—[Exchange.

[From the New York Times.]

The Fastest Trotting Horse Made on Fleet-wood—1:04½.

Yesterday morning Mr. Bonner's young stallion *Startle*, who was only five years old on the 16th of last month, was driven a mile against time over a sulky on Fleetwood Park in the marvelous time of 2:04½. The weather was fine, and the track made ever made in harness on Fleetwood by any horse. The mile was driven in three quarter mile by two seconds over made anywhere by any horse except *Jaquar*, who once trotted a half mile in 1:01, and by some time. Startle was timed by Mr. Bonner, Commodore Vanderbilt, Mr. Gallagher, Mr. McGowan, and other gentlemen. On Friday last he mented a full mile on Prospect Park in 2:19, when he was timed by Commodore Dodge and Messrs. Fleicher and Hoagland. That was the fastest mile that has yet been made this season. Startle is a brother to *Hound* to *Dexter*. He has not been done for him in the fall of 1870; but to-day's good day can conquer his worth from.

GOING A MAYING.

BY MARY ETTA DALLAS.

O come, go a Maying with me,
And rather round the whitewash pole!
Dusty worthies are we,
But if supposing to consecrate—
We've plenty of comfort, you see.

There rushes brown with his sickle!
Mark! down the street it goes, milk-and-sack.
There all the Perkinses flock,
Bearing their cakes and milk-a-brake—
Every mean! mischief-a-crack.

There are cobwebs wreathed in your tresses,
And knuckles scattered in mire;
Louise packed away all your best dresses,
And we forgot to wash when we shall dine.
Tra-la!
Isn't going a Maying divine?

O the beautiful, bright May day!
Where is the old umbrella?
Do you think we can carry the cat,
Dine up in a bundle, Bella—
Bella, my dear,
Where I live she scratches a roller.

O come, go a Maying with me,
And hear up a cheerful heart,
For whatever is cracked must be
We must learn from our glass wear to part,
Tra-la!
When May-day comes with its cast.

We will eat bread and cheese in a corner,
And drink from the pump in the yard,
Why not a new year be sweeter,
And bite a new Holly, my soul—
Tra-la!
Let us dance round the whitewash pole.

MARK HEBER'S LUCK,

or,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KEITH," "THE SHOSHEE SCOUT," "BRUNO'S HEADACH," "THE CLAIM-JUMPER MINE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

UPON THE LONG JOURNEY HOMEWARD.

The lustrous blue sky of Indiana rang through the affrighted camp. Bark leaped to his feet, with a yell, keen glance among them. The savages were close at hand. They had tethered their horses half a mile away, and crept up on foot in the shelter of a belt of trees, and their approach had not been detected by the drowsy guards until they were almost upon the camp.

Bark uttered a wild yell, a preconcerted signal with his Indian comrades, and with keen shouts and whoops, they leaped upon him, gathering about him in the very camp itself.

A horrible confusion followed.

The surprise and shifting encamped; the men flew to arms; the conductor shouted in his deep voice, and the rifles rang out their sharp and ill-fated knell of a savage attack pervaded the scene.

Some of the emigrants died in their terror, rushing down the bank of the river, and themselves into eternity upon the ground of the water's edge, hoped to remain unseen. Others fell, at the instant of the attack, the attack had been sudden and unexpected—a perfect surprise. The panic it produced was horrible.

Isabel Holley sprang from the wagon of her friends and dressed, her long golden hair flowing over her shoulders, and rushed out to the very midst of the tumult, utterly dazed and bewildered.

Mrs. Holley, his savage friends behind us, plundering and shooting and murdering, moved over them leaving men like in connection with Governor Kirk that very day. She rushed toward him, shrieking and imploring.

Bark's face lighted up with a lurid glow. He seized the girl and said something in the Indian tongue to one of the warriors, who caught the girl in his arms.

Isabel struggled in vain.

While they still filled the air, Governor Kent, revolver in hand, his noble figure towering, his eyes aflame, came bounding toward Bark and the girl, with the determination to effect her release.

He fired at the savages twice—thrice—and one of them reeled and fell. Bark sprang forward, two Indians close at his heels. A moment more, and Governor Kent was surrounded by the two of the Indians.

These incidents had occupied in less time than it has taken to record them. The first amazement of the emigrants had not passed—they had not yet recovered their courage and self-possession—when the two prisoners, Miss Holley and Governor Kent, were in the hands of the red men, and the camp in charge of two savages and Bark, and marched swiftly down the river bank to the spot where the horses were in waiting.

The mounted savages, under the guidance of Red Adder, who had received a few hints from Bark as to the instant flight, and the appearance of Isabel Holley, went on in their task of fighting and plundering.

Bark covered the ground in conflict at the camp, and carried the prisoners to the spot where the horses of the Indians were waiting. Their hands were secured with thongs behind their backs, and they were hastily mounted. Both the Governor and Miss Holley were strapped to their horses, in front of their savage bonds.

Bark then hastily mounted and seized the horses of the prisoners by the long rein-ring attached to the bridle, and with a yell to his savages, led the hastily away at a gallop.

The two Indians remained on guard over the horses.

The savages under Red Adder continued their deadly work at the camp. The emigrants rallying, a fight was raging whose issue none could foresee. A perfect storm of rifle shots came to the ears of Bark and his companions, as they fled with their prisoners.

Governor Kent had been disarmed previous to the two hands of his captors. He had fought and struggled like a hero, but his years and his life of ease were not favorable to the development of muscle, and his opponents had handled him easily. For some time he could be in bitter anguish; but when the noise of the camp very left behind he looked to Bark and said quietly:

"Can you not, for the sake of humanity, withdraw your red-nose hounds now?"

"Ya," said the Indian sneeringly. "That's the name I was travelling under during the last few years—Mr. Ben Allen Smith of Mississippi Emeline, Colorado."

"Is that your real name, sir?"

"Wall, no, it an't, old boss," answered Bark coolly. "You go a hundred miles further out west, and may have heard of me under the name of Bark Bill, the Indian fighter," answered Bark, with a sneer, sir—Bark!"

"Are you connected with the savages?" asked the Governor.

"I'd see I be," asserted Bark, rather grouchily. "I'm the leader of them red-skins you say to-night."

The Governor looked his loathing and contempt to the base villain.

"You are a villain, honest man," he said.

"How could I expect that from a white man living the enough and base enough to enter a compact honest emigrants and the savages? You betrayed us to the Indians. You are a thousand times worse than they—"

"I don't want to hear no preaching, Gov'nor," interrupted Bark sullenly. "I want to go down with me. If you keep a still tongue in your head, I'll see that you are treated as well as I can. If you don't, I won't answer for what'll happen."

Miss Holley moaned and wept, too terror-stricken still to collect her thoughts, or to think of her future.

After half an hour's brisk ride, Bark forded for the river with his captives, and struck out for the prairie west at a swinging gallop.

"Where are you taking us?" asked Governor Kent, after a long silence.

"Up to the Sioux country, more than two hundred miles from here," replied Bark good-naturedly.

Miss Holley uttered a faint scream.

"O dear! O dear!" she moaned. "I can never bear the journey. And I am so afraid of the Indians! I shall die on the way. Oh, Mr. Bark, do let me go! I'll give you my watch and chain and rings. Oh, do let Henry's name, let me go home!"

"Can't do it, Miss Holley," said Bark. "I've set out to take you, and take you I will."

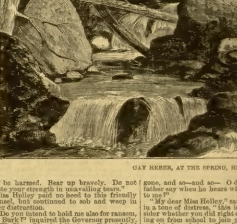
"What do you intend to do with Miss Holley?" inquired Governor Kent. "We have seen it do you to carry off a young lady into captivity? What will you gain by it?"

"Wall, you see," said Bark, "I was listening to what you and she said about her father being a rich man. Governor out in Denver. Now I'm rich, and thinks so much of her that I'm going to take her to her father's house. He don't want to lay her back, why, she'll be cared for. She's a regular beauty. Yes, that's what she is, and she won't have to wait long for suitors. If Miss Jack wasn't married already to an Indian wife, I'm sure he'd want her."

Miss Holley screamed.

"Are you a friend of Miss Jack?" demanded Governor Kent.

"I'm his right-hand man," said Bark importantly. "He lives up among the Sioux, and we are partners in fur. He is pleasant straight as we can travel."



GAY HEBER, AT THE SPRING, SEARS MARK'S SIGNAL.

"I had rather die than become the prisoner of Miss Jack," moaned Miss Holley. "I would have no terrible life. The friend of Miss Jack is the friend of his wickedness. Mr. Bark, do let me go! Please do, please me! I have money and jewelry. Take them, and let me go!"

"I don't mind taking them," said Bark, "but I'm going to pay on fish and profit, give every day. Miss Jack won't hurt you. Don't say that you'll give me. It won't do no good. He's a friend of mine."

Miss Holley relapsed in anguish, the tears streaming down her cheeks.

"Be calm, Miss Holley," said the Governor, "and we will suggest to you will be pleased to the payment of ransom money. You will

Miss Holley cried and moaned until she was exhausted, and then lapsed into uneasy slumber.

The Governor lay broad awake, watchful and observing.

About ten o'clock in the evening, Bark saw that the horses were beginning to show signs of varying humorous. The shadow became more and more distinct, and the moon was about to be a party of Indians, four or five in number. They belonged, he soon discovered, to the band of Red Adder, and were upon the trail of previous night, and Red Adder was among them.

The party came up, and Bark recognized the unfriendly features of Red Adder.

They were all in high good-humor.

"Ho, ho!" said Red Adder. "Heap good Bark. What he did you have?"

"Good luck," said Red Adder. "We drove off the stock of the emigrants. The boys are following with them. We plundered the wagons. We white men fought bravely, but our surprise had been too much for them. We killed many, and took the rest of the men bound, but we just drove women. We have their horses loaded with plunder."

Bark shared the good-humor of the savages.

"You've done well!" he said. "The Devil Bird will be proud of you."

"Who are your prisoners?" asked Red Adder.

"Some persons I am taking to the Devil Chief," answered Bark. "Let me see." He lowered his voice, "is the great chief's enemy. The girl has a rich father who can pay much ransom."

The Indians grunted approval.

Bark then had a long talk with them some fresh meat. They had killed an antelope during the day, and were having a feast upon it, fire and cooked it, and loud expressions of satisfaction.

Miss Holley was awakened by the noise, and Bark, with a few words explained the matter to her. Red Adder stooped and cut her with his hatchet, with the evident desire to frighten her out of her senses. Bark at once interfered, and gruffly told the girl to "shut up," which she was to be supposed, by forcing fairly subsided into stifled moans and sobs.

Bark gave the same of the meat to the Indians, and they were soon satisfied.

With six horses, and the plunder, the Indians were appointed for the night, and the Indians lay down to sleep.

At day dawn, upon the following morning, the party was rescinded, and breakfast was prepared. Both prisoners shared it. After the meal, the Indians were in their saddles, and moved to their horses with every appearance of haste. Bark was in his saddle, and with a yell, led the party on their long journey homeward.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A WISHBONE FULL OF PROMISE.

In the mean time, how fared it with Gay Heber and his friends? Gay, mounted on his fleet Sioux village, chained at night to a heavy log in the lodge of Blue Jack, governed by the Devil Chief, and his Indian wife Neonta?

Gay's position was not a pleasant one, and were but prospects, threatened by her enemy Bark, and the hatred of Red Adder, who had not yet had his revenge upon the boy, and the young even in think of marriage with any one but the one whose image was fixed in her spirit sank under a wave of despair, and that the world space she longed to die.

But, as we have intimated, her despair was not that of the native born, resigned to fate, and hopeful. She trusted in God's mercy and Providence, and in the strength of her love for little child. She trusted to Mark Heber also, and to the strength of his love and devotion.

Gay had hoped that he would be rescued in time to save her.

Then, when her Indian suitor had gone forth from the lodge of his Chief, and Gay was left alone with Neonta, she had thrown herself upon her knees, and prayed to God for help, and her prayers in a while grew more and more calm, and she arose, and went to sleep.

Gay awakened and awakened very late with her heads. Miss Jack returned by the time breakfast was ready, and Neonta served upon him as a subject waits upon a king. When he had finished, she ate her meal by the hearth. It was only on special occasions that the Indian women were allowed to eat together, and to-day, owing to Miss Jack's wish, sharing his meal with him.

Gay was at the fire, kneeling, and busy with coffee, strong to bitterness, sweetened in, and got a cup for Miss Jack, after she had a broiled bird and some corn-cake in a wooden bowl. She then served Neonta, and herself, and was given to her.

"Miss Jack, you don't seem to take away your appetite," said Gay, with a faint smile.

"Why should they?" asked Gay. "They will kill me, and I shall be happy."

"That's true," said the outlaw darkly and significantly. "They will kill you in short time."

Something in his tone or manner sent a chill to the girl's heart. She controlled herself with effort, but the remembrance lingered with her. She thought that he had read in her his mind about her marriage with Lance, and that he had hinted at something terrible for her.

"I wish the girl was dead, and out of my way," said Miss Jack, with a savage glance at her, to his Indian wife, gloomily. "I want to go down with the Devil Chief to see white women! I want to be a lady, and have my own way, and have ten pet captured her."

"Ya, ya," said Gay, "you go to Denver dressed Neonta, with a calico dash of her head. "Ugh! Ugh! Neonta no white squaw! She Devil Chief goes to see white woman! Ugh!"

"No, I don't," was the response. "I go on business. I go to sell furs, and buy goods, and I want to be a lady. I'm tired of being a squaw. I want my letters, Neonta, and I can't get them. I'm sick of this life, and I wish the girl here was dead."

"Ugh! Ugh! She not dead—be patient," said the Indian wife. "Neonta could kill the white girl, but Neonta not do it. Ugh! Ugh!"

"No, no. I don't want to know anything about it," said Miss Jack, with a shiver. "I'm not a murderess. I'm a lady, and I'll keep myself. She looks as like her mother," she added bitterly, as she looked at Gay, "that I cannot bear to kill her. Perhaps it would be best to marry her to some Indian, and have the dredgery, and I'll think the matter over."

Gay listened to this with a heart that sank at the fate in store for her, the Indian chief Yaka.

Neonta, after a few words of reply to Miss Jack, left the girl alone in the lodge to labor, and nothing in every brain, with a look of hatred and contempt on her face.

"Why do you release me?" she asked.

"Ugh! Ugh!" answered Neonta. "Girl slave. Girl work. Neonta not work now. Ugh! Ugh!"

Gay pointed at a heavy wooden bucket that stood near the door, and Neonta said: "Girl get water. Ugh! Ugh!"

"Where shall I go for water?"

Neonta pointed to the door, and called to her a tribe young Indian lad, some eight years of age, and said to him something in the native tongue, and then said to Gay:

"Boy show girl where water is."

Miss Jack hurried out of the door with a glad, light step. A breath of fresh air, after the stifling atmosphere of the lodge was very delightful to her. The sense of motion, unfettered by the cords that had bound her, was grateful to her. Her soul arose within her in spite of all her misfortunes, and she felt courageous.

The boy led her past the lodge of Yaka, and to the spring near the encampment, where the huts nearly to the outskirts of the village.

The spring was in a thicket of trees, full of leaves, and surrounding, and with them went a thick growth of dogs, leaping and barking.

The Indian lad halted beside a natural spring, and pointed to the water. Gay stooped, and leisurely, looking around her keenly.

The boy laid his hand upon her shoulder, and said something in the native tongue.

The spring was in the shadow of a clump of tall trees, and the branches of the trees, forming branches made a very bower of shade. Beneath the branches were leaves of grass, and looking as if they had thus lain in closely-packed masses for a long time, undisturbed by the wind.

Gay surveyed the village closely, and looked toward the forest, and then at the hut from which she believed with steadfast faith that Mark Heber would come to her aid, and she sighed, and took up her brimming bucket and returned to the lodge.

This was the beginning of her servitude.

Gay was now the slave and drudge of rough, coarse squaw, accustomed, coffee and corn bread, and the skin of the buffalo for her bed.

Her life was hard indeed. She made no complaints, serving them patiently and faithfully. She was up at the break of day, and down to the spring, accompanied by the Indian lad, and back with the water, and then she was set to watch against any attempt on her part to escape.

In the afternoon Neonta taught her to embroider moccasins with beads, and to make bags and quills of birds and of the hedgehog, and to dress skins, and to cook in the Indian fashion, which was now become Gay's appointed task.

Miss Jack, who had been so kind to her on the girl captive in Indian style, bringing her fresh clothes and meat, and fruit, and fish, and stiffened his long straight locks with bear's grease, and painted his face for the dredgery. The big gold hoops in his ears had been taken out, and his long hair was carefully combed and braided. He had unconsciously embroidered and friend. He would have given Gay her liberty if he had the right of it, but then disguising as Indian customs about it. He was a savage, and was governed by the laws of savage life.

Evidently he thought himself a gem of the first water, and his exterior considerably improved; a smirk and smile that looked oddly on his Indian features.

Gay smiled involuntarily at his airs and graces, and at the dandyism of his appearance. He interpreted the smile as an en-

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courragement to his suit. He addressed her in limited English, assuring her that the soul of Lenno, (to the birds in open spirit had sent for a mate, and that the Great Spirit had sent him to him. He wanted them to persuade, to such his guest, to fill his fields, and to be his bride.

Then he called himself to the extent of his knowledge of English. He told her that the Pawnee and the Arapahoes, and the many tribes, and the Indians of every nation, trembled and hid their faces in affright when they heard the name of Lenno. He told her that he was a great warrior, and had killed many of other Indians, and had taken their scalps to his wigwam by simply uttering the name of Lenno. He chanted his own praises in high measure, and Gay listened because she could not well do otherwise.

Feeling convinced that he had made a good impression upon her, and seeing that it was night's work, Lenno took his leave at last, and Neoma heard the captive scream to her mate, and Gay crouched down in her blanket and tried to sleep.

The next day, the next, and the next, were like the first. The same weary round of drudgery and toil; the same visits to the spring, attended and guarded by the Indian lad; the same lessons in conversation of which Gay was growing expert, and the same "courting" in the evening from the indefatigable Lenno.

Slim Jack grew anxious to be on the way to Denver. He knew that letters awaited him there, and he wanted them. He longed to hear from his daughter, whom he believed to be in safety with her friends in the city of gold.

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"Neoma," he said abruptly, with a glance around the lodge interior, "where is the girl?"

"I sent her this morning to the spring for water, with the lad to watch her, as I do each day, to her own language. "Does the Devil Chief wish to see her?"

"No; but I've made up my mind at last," said Jack, with a sigh of relief, "to leave you. She cannot marry Lenno. I have said it—I have said it—she must die!"

"The Devil Chief speaks well," said Neoma, who had no love for her young lodger. "The pale-faced girl shall die. Neoma and the Devil Chief desire to send her to the land of the spirits!"

To-night!" said Blue Jack recklessly. "I will not wait another day. I will tell her so. Give her some drink, Neoma, as usual, and I will see sadly. As for me, there is a council to-night in Yader's lodge, and I go to throw Gay's fate decided. He must dispose of her, or his trip would be crowned with evil, and she would escape from her prison, or be rescued. He grew sullen and morose, as he thought of this sad day upon her mother.

Upon the evening of the fourth day, as the shadows of the starless night were deepening in the valley, Gay Forbes left the lodge with his skin-draped couch to fetch water in a wicker, and smoked a pipe, thinking upon the one subject that filled his mind night and day.

"Neoma," he said abruptly, with a glance around the lodge interior, "where is the girl?"

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He strode with morose face from his wigwam, and went into the lodge of his Indian friend Yader.

Neoma took down from a peg above her wall a bunch of dried herbs and put them into an iron dish with water, and placed them over the fire, muttering:

"The Devil Chief has well said. When the girl comes in, she shall drink and die!"

Meanwhile, unconscious of the doom that had been settled for her, Gay Heber went to the spring, guarded by the Indian lad, who was always attended for when she was out of the lodge, and who never left her for a moment. him would cause the death, so Gay never made any attempt at escape. Usually to-day was accompanied by other Indians on the slopes, but to-night she had with her only the one lad.

She bent over the spring to fill her bucket of water, all around her the thick shadows of the early evening. There was neither moon nor stars visible in the sky, and the night fell as a sighed as she filled the bucket, rose, and stood with it hanging heavily at her side.

Some fashion children would have started had heaped dry leaves and twigs and sticks in the form of a cone, and, at the moment set fire to it. The flames rose ruddy, and the children danced around it with shouts and cries.

The Indian lad attending Gay moved away from her side, and joined in the sport of his companions, whose spirits he loved, with all his lavish zest in labor.

But Gay took no advantage of his brief, temporary abstraction. She knew that if she made a movement toward flight, the boy would hear her and arouse the village. So, she could not escape unaided, and a terrible dread seized heavily in her heart that some harm had happened to Jack, or that he had deserted her in a shudder, he had remembered the pair of heavy warriors under Red Adder and Black, and had been killed.

This thought came to her as she stood there in the dusky shadow, and her eyes flooded her brown eyes, and a choking sob escaped her.

Just then, from the branches of the trees above her, or from the ground beyond the spring—she could not tell which—came the hoot of an owl, loud, clear, and distinct.

Gay started. She had grown familiar now with Mark in their prairie home many a time, in the pleasant noon evenings. A sudden hope thrilled her. With her eyes fixed upon the wrapt Indian lad, she stole backward into the quivering notes.

The boy did not turn. He had taken Gay's utterance for the utterance of the bird whose cry she had so closely imitated.

Gay stood breathlessly—waiting.

And then through the darkness, covered by the clamor of the Indian children around their fire, and echoed even by the Indian lad, a soft low whisper fluted through the evening air, which shaped the words:

"Gay! Gay! Gay! I am just make out your face and form against the light of yonder fire."

The voice was that of Mark Heber.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14.

"BE SURE YOU'RE RIGHT, THEN GO AHEAD."

Not long since we were much amused (and perhaps slightly disgusted) in hearing a worthy old gentleman, who is a great stickler for temperance sounding which were heavily tinged with profanity, and which was never likely to exist. It reminded us very much of the speech of Charles the Second, of England. When Charles chartered the Royal Society he was informed by one the philosophers a royal lesson, and he responded to them the following:—

"Gay is it, my lords and gentlemen, that if you [illegible] I would wish to make you [illegible] that it will hold not a drop more, yet, putting a tankard in them, it shall not overflow the vessel."

Many were the sage conjectures.—the fish would absorb as much water as was necessary for his own bulk,—that he condensed the water so that amount, and that the alcohol had something to do with the phenomenon,—and many other reasons, which were propounded and abandoned in turn, much to the amusement of the merry monarch.

At length Mr. Wren, afterward Sir Christopher) modestly asked,

But is your Majesty aware that each would be the case?"

"Ay, there you have it," exclaimed the King, laughing. "Always gentlemen, first see whether a thing is true before you go about to account for it, and then I shall not be ashamed of the chance I have given you."—S. S. S.

—It is the nature of man to be displeased with everything that disappoints a favorite hope or flattering project; and it is the folly of too many of them, to condemn without investigating circumstances.

THE FATAL PROMISE.

BY KATE KENNEDY.

Women's friendships have often been derided, but sometimes they are only too faithful.

Such was the bond that united the Lady Isabel Lennox to Mrs. Forbes, the wife of the young Laird of Achincroch. Long Isabel was an Earl's only child and heiress, though her father's title would pass to a distant cousin, and Lady Isabel had been affianced almost beyond the twentieth, and even fortieth degree of kindred, to the young Laird. The two neighbors, being nearly of an age, were still goodlier acres, when Isabel, a spirituous girl and wilful, had taken a most disgusting excuse that in days of old marked the career of Scotch, and probably some modern, women.

Mrs. Forbes, the daughter of an old house and of undoubtedly loyal ancestry, was also a near neighbor of Lady Isabel, and could about the small time as her friend; but her husband, who was also a young man, was by birth, by education, and by inherited bent, a rigid disciple of the Covenant, and a Puritan to the backbone, and a representative of but very few of their virtues. The circumstance drew the bond of friendship all the closer between the two young wives, and Jessie Forbes considered herself for her friend's sake undergoing many many months of the year in her friend's absence.

Lady Isabel was the happy mother of several children, and Mrs. Forbes had only one daughter, and Mrs. Forbes had one only boy, whom Lady Isabel had never seen, as he could be but a few months old when she called in three into the country to visit her friend at Achincroch.

Some years after her marriage Lady Isabel had been seized with a fever, which threatened to affect her mind. Her mother had been summoned to her bedside, and precipice in the mountains near her house in the country, and had been lost in the driving and inextricable. She never recovered consciousness sufficiently to speak, and her husband, who had been summoned to her bedside, was standing, aghast but by all that was holy, to administer restoratives which were dangerous. From that moment her reason fled, and the weakness of the sufferer to whom they were applied. Lady Isabel's mind was left unhinged by her mother's death, calling upon her in vain, violently chafing her husband's otherwise showering by her distracted demeanor and unreasonable requests, and seemed to be on the verge of insanity when her husband died. All was of no avail, and the disconsolate woman could only murmur from time to time that she would be with her husband in heaven, and make it well worth her while to obey me. Will you do it for me?"

"I will, my mother," she said, with a remembering that if this awful mission were ever to be required of her, she would be left alone in the house of her father, with no one to lead and guide forever unpunished, she consented to the fatal promise.

"Now I am quite content," said Lady Isabel, more calmly than before. "I feel that the pain will be nothing compared to the happiness that I shall feel in rejoining my husband. But most thinly they will be my children, and you, my friend, will be a mother to them. Will you promise me that you will be to them, to make sure that I shall not be buried alive?"

This is too terrible to think of, Isabel. You will live many years yet."

"I am not deceived. If we live long enough you are my greatest friend, but if you will not promise me this, I shall die in fear. Isabel, I shall feel alive some seconds on the earth, and make it well worth your while to obey me. Will you do it for me?"

"I will, my mother," she said,

DIAMONDS OR ROSES?—WHICH SHALL IT BE?

BY LOUISE M. STONE.

Diamonds or Roses? now which shall it be?
And only one hour to decide!
And all through the future some sunshine or shade
Will rest on the choice of that hour to abide!

Then, Arielle like youth, and a stalwart son,
And a heart in life manly, brave!
Before him he beheld, as he chosen his bird
Is the noblest and truest to have.

He saw the cage and the gilding and love enough
To make the life all that it should;
He is digging the cellar, and building the roof
For what it first sway is not found.

Days love most, for her, but a life of toil,
And a narrow, close-wedged garret!
Age for taper fingers and rose-leaf palms
Is icy cold to grow hard and incrust!

Then her thought drifted on to the rich old
Uncle!

Who had asked her his home to share!
True, he said not a word about making her heir,
Perhaps though, he had some in mind!

She was fearful the figure was a trifle too stout
For a maiden of age so severe,
For the wrist to use busy in thatching his roof,
Time was very unflattering to bend!

But then, like a queen she would ride through
the land,
In diamonds and satin—second class,
And by the night wand of a magician, "You,"
Could say, "Your desires are all realized!"

'Neath the plain little bodice her heart gave a
throb,
The figure and its gold sped away;
Then a sigh for the lover and a sob wrestled
with
And Arielle and fate won the day.

A DARING GAME;

OR,

Neva's Three Lovers.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE MYSTERY OF MARSHWOOD," "THE BAILEY'S SCHOOL," "THE LADY OF ST. HILDA'S," "THE DEVIL'S DUE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLV.

AN UNTIMELY ARRIVAL.

In the early dawn of a gray wild morning, Mr. Harold of Locust Town, and Mr. Atkins of Riverwood, Jr., were proceeded directly to the Bayard Hotel, and ordered bedrooms and sitting-room, and ordered breakfast. Some attention to their toilet was necessary, after baths and vigorous brushing, they met in their sitting-room, and here a hearty, appetizing Scottish breakfast was served to them.

They were still lingering at the table, discussing various points of interest, when a knock was heard at the door, and the landlord, who had first acted as waiter to them, entered the room.

He was a fine, small man, with a sharp business face, and looked the very ideal of a keen commercial traveler, and he stood for the moment supposed that such was his vocation, but he was not, as he soon learned to his wrong cost. His impression was speedily corrected.

"Good-morning, my host," said the officer addressing himself to the young Earl. "Expected you last night, yesterday. Good-morning, Mr. Atkins. Fine morning, sir—for those who like it, and, as you are about to leave us, I suppose you do."

"Say what you have to say here, Ryan," said the young Earl. "Mr. Atkins is a friend—a guardian of the young lady of whom we are in search, and his gentleman, Mr. Hardale, is also a friend of Miss Wrede. Speak out, therefore, before any one anywhere."

The detective glanced half uneasily at the two gentlemen, and then at the landlord, as if he was in no position to speak. The grey hair and gray military beard had not greatly changed the face's dark shade, but Ryan had never seen the Baronet before, and of course considered him a friend of the landlord.

The Baronet arose and went to the hearth, and stirred the fire, and then, his face half turned away from the officer, who again addressed himself to Lord Town.

"There is news, my lord, for your private ear. I succeeded in tracing Rufus Black up to this place. He was in Caledonia, and, in fact, he is stopping there now."

The young Earl's face flushed with excitement.

"Then we cannot be far from Miss Wrede?" he exclaimed. "He has stopped two or three days at Inverness, and that proves that he has not come far from there. Is he born out of Inverness since he came?"

The detective's face clouded a little.

Rufus Black arrived at Inverness the day before yesterday," he said. "I was there, and when I saw the way he was going, I followed him to Caledonia, and there I lost him."

Yesterday I followed the officer," he strolled about the town all the forenoon, and went down to the river, and looked at the wharves on the Canal, and seemed to be making up his mind to something that required courage. After breakfast at the Caledonian, he went to the office of the Canal Company, and remained there a long while.

And you followed him?" cried Atkins.

"What, and play a sharp old lawyer Crown Block on his guard?" ejaculated Ryan, in astonishment. "No, sir. No, sir. I left my companion pat to deal with Mr. Black and his lady-love and their lawyer on any old stagery they knew. It wouldn't do to let them see me, and I knew that Rufus Black would be on the watch, and perhaps put the new-comer in peril. People do a many things when they get desperate, and I let them go each on their own, sure to learn them if found out."

A stiffer gloom rested on the Scotch Ryan shot a quick, suspicious glance at him.

"Then you left Miss Wrede, Ryan," said Mr. Atkins impatiently. "You have freed the gang and escaped yourself, but—"

"No, sir, indeed," the officer said, deliberately. "I saw the cabby after Rufus Black had gone, and got a word or two out of the fellow all that he knew. Mind you, my man was not in the secret, and he had been cock-sorrow in existence. The cabby knew that Rufus Black was a lawyer, and it wasn't long before I was over with his fare to an estate called Heather Hills, between this and Locust Town, and I saw the lady and gentleman seeking, and each pointed down the road, and I saw Rufus Black stride off and trudge down the fields. Cabby put an oil-cloth on his horse, for the wind was blowing hard and strong from the sea, and sat there on his box, and sat there, I suppose to grow dark, and he began to swear a blue streak; and then, at last, I saw Rufus Black coming back, and he struck out on the road, and began to hail a hansom on to him so very fonder, that cabby saw that they were lovers."

"Impossible!" cried Lord Town, turning pale. "I will stake my very soul on Miss Wrede's courage, and her ability to fly, on personal fears, to other ties, upon slave love and gratitude. Rufus Black is a man of brave and glorious nature; I know that she could never know a moment of weakness or trembling. The calumny has deceived you, Ryan."

"No, my lord," said the detective doggedly. "I'll stake anything your lordship likes on it, my lord, that Miss Wrede is not in Heather Hills, and that Rufus Black is not there, and that he is off to Locust Town, and that he is off to Locust Town, and that he is off to Locust Town

IS IT WORTH THE PRICE?

BY ESTELL LYNN.

More men in search of the lay pole,
The myths staff around which we roll,
The wonderful star by which we may be
All satisfied with the Polar Sea.

What if they find both the Pole and Sea!
What better than earth's children be!
Who wants a home that he needs must share
With a frozen bear or polar bear?

Silence and glaciers, snows and fogs,
Dark cold and darkness, and whale's logs;
And though Aurora may gild the night,
One needs must freeze while he sees the sight.

To ship on the errands of treasonous bent
Would crush out the life of a patriot's soul;
Would cause all the battery guns to be
So chimney shafts a household fire.

"Science"—I know. As the old wife wists,
Being bewildered down to the Blessed dates,
Counting earthward yet for some token yet
Of the leaves for John, whom she can't forget;

Think you all the charts that explorers gave
Can hide from her that unaided grave?
Think you God's angels will not know
Where to call equal to the search now?

There shall be new tales of beleaguer ships,
And superhuman woe and horror to tell
Of such himself for the readers sell
And the sound of bells in the ears of God.

Some blind and faint with the ceaseless stare,
They shall stumble on through the summer's
same,
Wasted and worn for the vanished light;
They shall fight for the Arctic night.

Is there life to eat, or a soul to save,
Win a name by an Arctic man's grave?
Is there wrong to right, or a heart to lose
Shall the earth go on? Yes, it does not. Yes.

But this: to outline on a chart save,
Where a great city can't be, is worth the price!
To claim fresh fields of science for science be
At such terrific cost, is it worth the price?

ONLY A SONG.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Monsieur Dufonts, who had a large family and a small income, lived in the upper floor of a large building in the city of Paris; not to-day nor to-morrow, but some years ago. Monsieur Dufonts, the manager of a theatre, was not rich, therefore no one as yet had heard anything of him.

It was a little narrow room, with one very high window; but it had the advantage over all of this window one could, at the risk of breaking one's neck, catch a glimpse of the beautiful primadonna, Mdlle. La C——, as she hovered herself on the leaves of the trees in the garden of this humble tenant, that Monsieur Fernande had secured for his family.

He was dreadfully in love with her, though they had never spoken to each other, and he fondly and falsely believed that she knew it; that he had thrown her bonnets, and had given him special thanks for them as she bore them against her pretty chin, and loved the flowers that had come with them, and that the beaming smile of an actress down upon the house.

If ever he made his name and fortune, then she should know, but not until then. So he lived on in silence, and worked at his composition, and offered them to publishers, and had them "declined with thanks."

Now and then, of course, he sold a song, but the songs were of a humble order, and he must have succumbed to death had he not secured the position and the piano for some dancing party. At the last he lived on bread and coffee and a little soup.

In his room he had an old piano, a desk, a chair, a mountebank, and a little charcoal furnace. When he had five francs to put in his pocket, and it was not rent day, he felt rich.

Mdlle. La C—— had her various lounges and toilets sent to be bought for money, but she lavished gold on her friends, on herself, on her pet poodle, on beggars who held out their crooked hands, and showed their determined faces at the door of the theatre, as she tripped from it to her carriage.

They said she had a very peasant child, whose comfort today, and whose keeping at the best of schools, she had caught the ear of a wealthy music-seller, who had had her taught in consequence. They tell such stories of so many people. No one would have guessed, from her manner now, that she ever had been other than a lady, or that she had extravagances she was growing rich, and could make it with a party, she was not.

Young, beautiful, and gay, she could be happy in a garret, which she could sing so divinely. Mendic she could not have come out of those little songs which were written in the purest vein, and which were her bright prayer by life. Each one was a gem, and probably M. Fernande more fit for success than any that came its own work. Still, rattling marches, waltzes, and dances, were in such great demand, and he did so well among these specialties, and while his little songs were lying neglected on the counter, others were pushed the counter at all, being secured from the first by publishers with an eye to their sale, however much there may have been in their shop.

If, indeed, some well-known singer would have come to Monsieur Fernande and said, "Monsieur C——, for instance, some night have a song for me. The thought came into your head in the heart by inspiration, and I am enchanted into a reality; but it must be the best of all that I should lay before his idol, the very best—nothing else would do."

So he wrote in his attic room, one cold winter, and before, the happy song had trilled from his lungs, and laughed and chatted, and was extremely generous, and never even knew of his existence who, evening after evening, watched her, listened to her, and loved her with a love that was pure as gold. He held her in reverence as a saint, and knew nothing about her.

At last, in some moment of romantic infatuation, our composer sent her a letter. It was the words of a song which he had written for her, and which he had failed to fit as air so well as he could wish, or substitute. Many a starving Frenchman has died in his attic, and he knew of all that he had written, that another particular gem fit to lay before his lady.

He copied it out daintily; he wrote a pretty note without any surname, and left it at the Académie, and he resolved to leave it at her address, and to remain unseen.

"If I should ever know her sing it, I should be so happy—so happy," he said to himself, "I should be willing to die."

What strange things we say sometimes! Did you ever say anything, and quite mean it, that afterward proved itself true, though not as you intended it to be?

And one morning he said—

"I will go to-night," and with these words left his little room for the day.

He had a few chairs with the precious little sweet in his hand, and placed before the door that led to Mdlle. La C——'s suit of rooms with a palpitating heart. He had intended to knock, and leave the music and the note with a servant, but he knew, however, that he must be seen and spoken to. Possibly he saw her dainty hand, and it was enough. He knocked, and he did not put the music upon her threshold as soon as the door was opened, because her singing it seemed more than he might speak. He crept in; he laid the parcel down softly, and with reverence, and did so his eye fell upon a miniature. It was a portrait of his lovely herself, and it was set in costly gems. These he neither noticed nor cared for. All he saw in the world was her, and, as he grew it, he examined it; he took it in his hand.

"It is lovely!" he said. "It is wonderful!"

And I think he would have loved it, but that at that moment he heard a little scream and a savage growl.

He turned. The scream came from Mdlle. La C——, the growl from a gentleman who accompanied her, and on the instant two hands came down on Fernande's shoulders, and the miniature was wrested from him.

"How careless of Auguste," cried the lady, "to leave the door open for thieves to enter by!"

The gentleman lustily called for help.

Fernande said nothing. Conscious of his terrible position, he looked at the lovely one, and it was so sun passed through the changing of a moment that he knew himself to be arrested and cast into prison.

The puma dorma appeared against him when the case came on. She had found him the man to her room. He had a valuable ornament in his hand. She believed that he intended to steal it. She had never seen him before.

At the beginning of the trial he could be heard to say, "She had never seen him before." She did not smile upon him when to throw her that bouquet of Provence roses. It was all fancy. He had caught her eye.

The gentleman testified that he had been with Madame, and that he had been with Madame, and that he knew him to be a thief. A brigand and a rascal, who had called to him, and had said he only say that he was not a thief. He would not swear one in his misery. He would not, even give his calling. He was living by many and various modes of defence.

"I am named Fernande, and I have twenty-three years, and I am nothing and nobody."

This he said, when called upon to account for himself. He was condemned. And he was never then vagrant, and condemned to six months' imprisonment.

Mdlle. La C—— had the miniature. She declared that she "hated to go to such frauds," and that she "delighted to have it," and received Ruffini a packet upon her table.

Fernande, from Fernande's little room, sees note, at which she laughed and hummed the song, presuming it "pretty enough." A few days after she rescinded it, and on being encored one night, believed to have to sing it.

Poor Fernande! if he could but have been there to learn and how she received the song, his pretty little lay of love and death, and to hear how she spoke of it!

After that, the manager bought Madame's song, and it was sung by her, and was a delight, and the lady obeyed her request.

Fernande was in prison, and it was published. Having the right to name it, he named it, it was called Mdlle. La C——'s song. Fernande was in prison, and he never knew; and it sold as never song sold before.

One day, in the garden of the prison where Fernande was confined,

He was in the midst of a circle of curiosity, and said to one in authority in the place—

"Monsieur, I am dying. Shall I find a little very soon?"

"Monsieur, I am dying," said the man. "Monsieur, I am dying."

And Madamoiselle smiled, and tried her voice with a little trill, and began her Fernande's song, "Love's Dying Dream."

And the prisoner, Fernande, watched her; he (it is stated) wrote a song for the benefit of Mdlle. La C——, and sold it to a publisher with an eye to the future, as he whispered to himself—

"What is the matter?" whispered Number Twenty-three to Number Twenty-four. "Are you ill, my son, my speak?"

"What is the matter?" asked the singer of the Superintendent, in the last notes of her song, and ceased to sing.

"Some common fellow has died," said the Superintendent, "and Mdlle. La C—— was singing.

THE PARSON'S LESSON.

Deacon Slocum, as had been his custom for a number of years, invited the minister to a Christmas dinner. His wife was dead, and his children were away. Too to carry it over to the parsonage. But Tom objected.

"How now, my son?" demanded the deacon.

"You have always had a turkey, and I think turkey to the parson last year, and your elder brothers had them in the years before. It were big enough."

"Well, grumbled Tom, "Parson Grumper was never the man to say 'No,' I guess. It don't set well on my stomach to give a turkey to a man who don't thank you a favor."

"Tom," said the deacon, "remember, Parson Grumper is a peculiar man. He means well. And we'll have one, and, Tom, be thankful you're not put the house upon last Christmas, as some folks have done. Parson Grumper is a man who don't like to say things he might speak. He says in; he laid the parcel down softly, and with reverence, and so he ate, he felt upon a miniature. It was a portrait of his lovely herself, and it was set in costly gems. These he neither noticed nor cared for. All he saw in the world was her, and, as he grew it, he examined it; he took it in his hand.

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"Some common fellow has died," said the Superintendent, "and Mdlle. La C—— was singing.

He he ceased," cried the lady, looking about her as though she had heard that a tiger had escaped.

"After a manner, Mademoiselle," said the Superintendent, "he has."

"These people are so hard to please," said Mdlle. La C——, "I know how dread-ful!"

They lprised Fernande in whatever spot of ground is given to pass, and Mdlle. La Mdlle. La C—— sang on until she sang herself away, as one sings at all, she will sometimes be so free and light, and she will be so at ease, and then, as now, so plaintive. Mad-ame, however, it is a favorite with Mademoiselle.

No one new remembers Number Twenty-three, Fernande, who was supposed as to die while Mdlle. La C—— was singing.

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the audible smile of his clerical guests stirred up his good-natured soul to a degree of action, and sent the last out with the force of allover.

SCIENCE.

Professor Hexler, in his last lecture at Manchester, dwelt on the importance of forests, and the following interesting account of the origin of the coal-fields, which are now the source of so much wealth, was given: "Coal is supposed to be the remains of forests which people are now digging out of the earth. Some of the finest anthracite coal is found in Pennsylvania, in the United States, and in Wales, in Great Britain. Coal is found in many other countries, but in these two countries it is found in the greatest abundance. Coal is found in layers, or beds, one above another, sometimes as many as thirty or forty in number. These beds are separated by rock, or by layers of earth, or by slate, or by sandstone, or by limestone, or by clay, which is called fire-clay, because it will stand the heat of a furnace. Sometimes the coal is found in a perpendicular position, and sometimes in a horizontal position. We must go to the United States to find coal in different positions. Sometimes it is found in a slanting position, and sometimes in a horizontal position. Geologists have proved that the United States will not change its position for thousands of years to come. Therefore, I would advise those emigrants who are going to the United States to buy stock only for speaking purposes, and not for investment, as I am afraid it will be withheld, and that the United States will not be cast down to the bottomless by-and-by, as many of the stocks are that are now being sold. Now, I will not say anything more about stocks, but will proceed with my lecture. Coal is found in many parts of the world, but in some it is found in greater abundance than in others. We need no more than to look at the map of the world to see that the United States and Great Britain are more favored than other countries in the matter of coal. Coal is found in Russia, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Spain, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Germany, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in France, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Italy, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Switzerland, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Austria, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Hungary, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Turkey, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in Greece, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. 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Coal is found in the Society Islands, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in the Friendly Islands, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in the Navigator Islands, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in the Caroline Islands, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in the Pelew Islands, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in the Ladrone Islands, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in the Philippine Islands, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. Coal is found in the Moluccas, but it is not found in such abundance as in the United States and Great Britain. 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